Encounter

March 1978 80p

Clive Sinclair
Story

George Feaver
Pilgrimage of the Webbs

François Fejtö
Gramsci in Paris

F. A. Hayek
Miscarriage of the Democratic Ideal

Ferdinand Mount
Peter Handke

Melvin J. Lasky
In the Margin

The Russian Question

GEORGE F. KENNAN reconsiders the classic "Cold War" position he took 30 years ago in his "Mr X" article . . .

ALAIN BESANÇON reinterprets Russian history in terms of a Slav pact and a Soviet present . . .

A SPECIAL BOOK SECTION

Philosophy & Psychology

Roy Harris
Neil Warren
Ninian Smart
Michael Dummett

and an essay by ANTONY FLEW on "The Procrustean Ideal"

Edited by Melvin J. Lasky & Anthony Thwaite

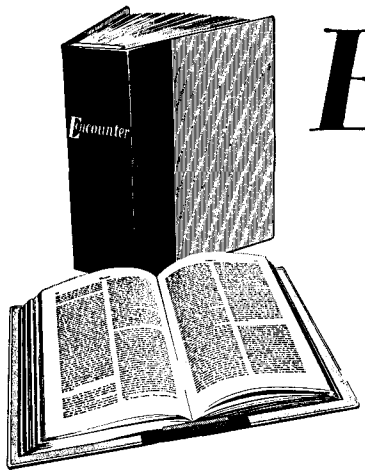
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Spectator Spectator Spectator

Politics... Current Affairs...
the City... Books... Art...
Theatre... Cinema... Music...
Television...Chess...

Weekly, 25p

Spectator Spectator Spectator



Encounter BINDER

The ENCOUNTER Easibinder enables readers, for half the cost of full binding, to preserve their copies in an attractive and durable format. Each copy of the magazine, as received, can be quickly inserted in the case and secured there. Copies can just as easily be removed.

The binder holds six copies. It is strongly made with stiff covers, bound in maroon and grey cloth, with the title of the magazine blocked in gold on the spine. Full assembly instructions are included with each binder.

The ENCOUNTER Easibinder costs £2.00 or $4.00, including the costs of packing and posting by surface mail to any address in the world. There is no trade discount.

ORDER BY COUPON OR SIMILAR LETTER

To **ENCOUNTER (Binder), 59 ST MARTIN'S LANE, LONDON WC2**
Please send.....ENCOUNTER Easibinder(s). I enclose cheque/P.O. for.....(£2.00 or $4.00 per binder)
NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
.....

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Encounter

MARCH 1978
VOL. L NO. 3

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY *and* ANTHONY THWAITE
MANAGING EDITOR: *Margot Walmsley* ASSISTANT EDITOR: *Bryan Healing*
GENERAL MANAGER: *Anthony Robinson* ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: *John Hall*
ADVISORY BOARD: *Maurice Cranston, D. J. Enright, Anthony Hartley, Leo Labedz, Goronwy Rees, Edward Shils, John Weightman*
PUBLISHING ADVISERS: *Lord Ardwick, Blouke Carus, Lord Cudlipp, Cecil Harmsworth King, Leon Levy, Jack Watmough*
Per copy: UK 80p: USA & Canada $2.00. Back numbers £1.00 ($2.50). Postage extra: 15p (25c)
Annual Subscriptions: UK & Europe £8.75: USA & Canada $21.00 surface, $26.00 by air: Elsewhere £10.00.
Binder for six copies: £2.00 ($4.00).
Address for all departments: Encounter Ltd., 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS (01-836 4194).
US news-stand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc., P.O. Box 1425, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.
Authorised as Second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.
Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. ©*1978 by Encounter Ltd.*
Manuscripts are only returned if accompanied by s.a.e. (English stamp or International Reply Coupons).

A MOMENT OF HAPPINESS *(story)* 3 *Clive Sinclair*
A CURRENT ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS 7 *George F. Kennan*
THE MISCARRIAGE OF THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL 14 *F. A. Hayek*
COLUMN 20 *R*

MEN & IDEAS
THE WEBBS AS PILGRIMS 23 *George Feaver*

POETRY
Frank Ormsby 13, *Blake Morrison* 17, *Tony Weston* 18, *R. S. Thomas* 19, *Peter Porter* 32, *Peter Redgrove* 69

NOTES & TOPICS
PETER HANDKE, & "ALIENATION FICTION" 33 *Ferdinand Mount*
A NEW GURU OF THE PARIS INTELLECTUALS 37 *François Fejtö*

SPECIAL BOOK SECTION: PHILOSOPHY & PSYCHOLOGY
WORD WARS 42 *Roy Harris*
WAYS OF LOOKING 50 *Ninian Smart*
FREUDIANS & LAINGIANS 56 *Neil Warren*
RECKONINGS 63 *Michael Dummett*

DISCUSSION
THE PROCRUSTEAN IDEAL 70 *Antony Flew*

EAST & WEST
SOVIET PRESENT & RUSSIAN PAST 80 *Alain Besançon*

IN THE MARGIN
SOLZHENITSYN'S CHILDREN? 90 *Melvin J. Lasky*

DOCUMENTS
"Mad" (*Alton Frye*) 9, *Slave Trade* (*John England*) 91, *Dr Kiosk Speaks Again II* (*Peter Simple*) 95

LETTERS 93

AUTHORS 96

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"ENCOUNTER has made up more minds than any other intellectual journal of our time . . ."

A reader writes

". . . We are a polyglot bunch here at the Common Market headquarters. We read *Le Monde, The Times,* the *Herald-Tribune,* the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung,* the *Corriere,* and what-not every day. We look at *Der Spiegel,* and *L'Express,* and leaf through *Time/Newsweek,* etc., etc. . . . But may I tell you that nothing on any day or in any week gives many of us so much pleasure—and so much instruction—as the monthly copy of the new ENCOUNTER. That it comes from England, so often taken to be provincial and 'off-shore', gives us special cosmopolitan pleasure. . . . It is the one journal that gives us the feeling that we are indeed in touch with the main intellectual currents of European—no, I should say Western—civilisation. . . ."

L.C. (Brussels)

ENCOUNTER published in 1977:

Symposium
Who's Left, What's Right?
John Wain, Auberon Waugh, Daniel Bell, Peter Jenkins, Peter Jay, Donald MacRae, Hugh Thomas, Luigi Barzini, Golo Mann, David Holden, Robert Conquest, J. L. Talmon, George Urban, Leo Rosten, Peregrine Worsthorne, Constantine Fitzgibbon
(Feb.–March)

ANDREW SHONFIELD
Can Capitalism Survive Until 1999?
(January)

J. P. STERN
Nietzsche
(February)

JONATHAN POWER
The Peace People
(March)

ANTHONY THWAITE
American Verse
(March)

ANGUS WILSON
My Oxford
(April)

PETER JAY
The New TV System
(April)

WILFRIED WIEGAND
Art Forgeries
(May)

DANIEL BELL
Teletext & Technology
(June)

COLIN CLARK
Memoir of the '20s
(June)

B. H. HAGGIN
Toscanini to Klemperer
(July)

RICHARD LOWENTHAL
Why are the West's Intellectuals Disaffected?
(July)

HYAM MACCOBY
Zeffirelli's "Tele-Jesus"
(July)

LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI
Euro-Communist Illusions
(August)

FRIEDRICH A. HAYEK
My Cousin, Wittgenstein
(August)

WALTER LAQUEUR
Godfather of Terrorism
(August)

RAYMOND ARON
My Defence of Our Decadent Europe
(Sept.–Oct.)

CHRISTOPHER BOOKER
Tom Wolfe
(September)

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN
Liberty & Terror
(October)

ROY FULLER
Whose Taxes for What Art?
(October)

A. J. P. TAYLOR
Historian's Credo
(October)

JOHN RAE
Our Obsolete Attitudes
(November)

MELVIN J. LASKY
Voyage among the "Ugly Germans"
(November)

THEODORE DRAPER
Intellectuals in US Politics
(December)

YEHUDI MENUHIN
Toscanini & Furtwängler
(December)

MARTIN ESSLIN
Brecht as Icon
(December)

KENNETH MINOGUE
J. K. Galbraith
(December)

Short Stories by
V. S. Pritchett, Gillian Tindall, William Trevor, Philip Purser, Italo Calvino, Francis King, Laurence Lerner, Nadine Gordimer

Back numbers £1.00 ($2.50). Postage extra 15p (25c).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Clive Sinclair

A Moment of Happiness

I LIVE IN FEAR. That's a state of mind, not my address.

Years ago I sat my exams at the Charles University. I had learned my work well and I was not nervous; until I saw the booklet that I was required to fill with my answers. I knew that in three hours it would be full, but I also foresaw the impossibility of my ever doing it; I felt that I was an insufficient motor to fulfil the inevitable. I tried to start the first question, but my hand was unable to control the pen. I could not form a single letter. Sweat began to roll along the lines on my hand and flow on to the page. I ran out of the hall. My sweat looked like teardrops on the page. All my Professors were sympathetic, but they still failed me. Now no one will believe that I am an educated man.

It is six in the morning. Through my window I can see that the Vltava is turning gold with the rising of the sun. A beautiful sight, but I am immune to it; it fails to excite a single response in me. All it means is that it is time to move my bowels and to dress. Some days I am constipated, other days I have diarrhoea, less often I am regular. Every morning I examine the lavatory bowl, like an ancient sage, to see if I can divine what sort of day I have in store. This is fundamentally much more important than either the weather or the view. Today my movements have been very loose, which means I must pass the hours between now and bedtime in constant anticipation of further activity, presaging who knows what stomach complaint.

Once I discussed this morbid hypochondria with a doctor acquaintance and he, priding himself on his psychological insight, said that I did not trust my own body, would not believe that all those millions of inter-dependent functions could go on performing in harmony day after day without super-vision. He accused me of introspective paranoia. Perhaps he is right. To me to get through a day is an achievement. As for the future, I have no faith in that at all. At best it is a process of gradual decomposition. I think only in terms of the present and the past. I try to make the future as similar to the present as I can by sticking rigidly to an established dogma; I always get out of bed on the same side, I eat the same breakfast, I buy the same food in the same shops. My only desire in this life is to be a character in a photograph; smiling with remembered pleasure, eternally fixed in the present.

In many ways today is not normal. I have to work. *Rude Pravo* has a bold red headline: "PLNY ZDAR XV SJEZDU STRANY!" It is, of course, the start of the XVth Party Congress. And my beloved Prague is full of flags; equal numbers of Czech flags and Russian flags. To mark the occasion our local shop is unusually well-stocked with imported fruit; grapefruit, oranges, bananas and pineapples. This glut, which lured me into over-indulgence, must explain this morning's diarrhoea (I have been a second time). My job, which is going to last the whole of this week, requires me to stand beside a stall piled high with miniature Czech and Russian flags. This is situated outside (of all places!) the Pan American office. I sell a few flags, but mostly people ignore me and look at the posters in the window which say, "Come to the USA and help us celebrate our Bicentennial." On the opposite side of the street a peasant woman in head-scarf and embroidered apron is hawking painted eggs for Easter. When someone buys one she nicks the top and bottom off the shell and pulls a ribbon through it. I do not have much appetite, but I eat a little lunch; garlic sausage, a pickled cucumber and some rye bread. Afterwards I have to go to the toilet again. In the afternoon the sun goes behind a black cloud and it begins to feel chilly standing around in the street. I notice a couple walking towards me carrying the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

English edition of Ctibor Rybar's guide to Prague. I approach them waving a Russian flag and say, "Do you wish to exchange money?" I can see that this has surprised them. They have been saying "no" to money-changers all day, but I have got them off guard. "I will give you forty crowns to the pound", I say. This is twice the official rate. There is a moment's hesitation, then they ask to change £10.

We complete the transaction in the Café Europa. I hate it there. It is supposed to look like a Parisian café but looks are nothing; nowadays it is full of riff-raff; gypsies and workmen from the new Metro. The waiters wear ill-fitting tuxedos and are rude to everyone. I do not understand how the authorities tolerate them; probably because they never enter the Café Europa. Very sensible. I was once served pork here that was off, and I ended up in bed for a week with terrible cramps. I assure the couple that it is an excellent place to dine. They order a glass of mineral water and a bottle of coca-cola. The girl tells me that a friend of theirs came to Prague, met a Jewess in the Staronova Synagogue, stayed with her nine days, and married her six months later. She shows me a clipping from the *New York Times*. It is a article the fellow has written about his trip to romantic Prague. "For years Czech émigrés in New York and London had regaled me with memories of the beauty of Prague", I read. "The city itself still claims the affection of the 1968 generation of emigrants who, often in the same breath, described the charms of its women and the bankruptcy of its politics." The piece makes me want to vomit. I do not recognise the city he is writing about. It may as well be Xanadu.

"Robert couldn't get to the shul quickly enough", says the girl. "I think he was hoping to meet an exotic Jewish girl for himself." I look at this Robert more carefully and wonder how I did not see before that he is Jewish. I can tell by the sharp way his eyes are examining me. I do not like the Jews. They trust nobody but themselves. I can see that he is growing suspicious of me; he has noticed that my fingers are short and stubby. I have been told that this is a sign that I am not a pleasant person. I sit on my hands. I smile at the girl and begin to explain that I was not always this insignificant. "I once worked for Cedok", I say, "and I used to take tours all over Eastern Europe. But in 1969 they gave me an important tour to Italy. And this, I must tell you, was my downfall. You know why? It is very simple. I went out with twenty persons and I came back with four. On the last day, at Trieste, I am sitting in the coach waiting for my party and only these four turn up. The rest want political asylum! And you know what? The coach driver also vanished. They had to send me out a new driver. When we returned at last I was fired. Just like that. Is it my fault people want to leave this country? I tell you, it's got so bad now that no one trusts anyone any more. Everything must be a big secret!" The girl is sympathetic, but that Robert is weighing up in his mind whether he should believe me. Well, it is the truth! I happen to know that a Cedok guide was sacked for losing practically a whole group in the West.

THE STARING EYES of the Jew have made me afraid. I make an excuse and hastily leave the café. There's no real reason, I've told those stories many times before. But walking back to my rooms, without warning, my stomach turns to water; I feel dizzy; I know every stone in the street but I lose all confidence in my ability to get to the other end. I begin to run, to race my fears, imagining fearful phantoms lurking in the shadows, the secret policemen of my sub-conscious, trying to grab me. To arrest me for what? For being a fraud, a counterfeit man? A drunk full of Pilsner staggers towards me. He nods to me as if in recognition of a fellow sufferer. Madness! I do not suffer. But even as I turn the corner I know that the drunk has straightened up and is watching me.

Next day I meet the couple again. I would rather not talk to them, but they seem anxious to tell me how much they have seen of Prague. "This morning we saw the tomb of Rabbi Low", says the girl, "and we left a note with our names on it." "Have you heard all about Rabbi Low and his famous Golem?" I ask. Surely they are not interested in that superstitious rubbish! Then I recall that Robert is a Jew. I consider telling him why the Nazis did not destroy the Prague ghetto. Because they wanted to preserve it as

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a museum of a vanished race. Now there are hardly any Jews left in Prague and the synagogues are maintained by the government as museums. And the chief sightseers are our wonderful East German comrades. Such ironies give me much pleasure. The girl is still talking. Ah, now what has Mr Robert got to say? "One thing I miss, not being able to speak the language", he says, "is the fun of eavesdropping. When we get back we will be asked, 'What were the people like? Happy?' And all I will be able to say is that they looked like people; some looked pleased, others looked miserable. How am I supposed to tell what they are thinking?" I am thinking; what if I were to accuse this Jewboy of being a Zionist and then rape his girlfriend? I nod sympathetically. The girl pulls something out of her handbag and says, "Look what we bought with the money we changed yesterday." It is an ancient coin; tiny and silver; what would anyone want with that? "It's supposed to be a dinar of Vratislav II," says Robert. Supposed! The suspicious kike. If he got it at Starozitnost's it *is* a dinar of Vratislav II. "I'll tell you two something", I say confidentially. "On my mother's side my ancestors go right back to this Vratislav II. He was the first real King of the Czechs, you know. Founded that monastery right up there on top of the Castle. Strahov. Yes, I was once a person of high rank. I had money. When I was 17 I inherited our family estates. They were worth something in the order of half a million. In those days, you can imagine! Well, I made a fantastic success of it. Implemented so many reforms in forestry that I was awarded an honorary degree in agriculture from Charles University. Then came the war. And you can guess what happened after. The communists have it all now." A person approaches me to buy a Russian flag. I think it's a fellow. I look more carefully and see he's got a huge chest, like a hunchback turned round. Daft! They're tits. I look at the person's face again and see that it is a very ugly girl. I think: what sort of life can she lead?

ROBERT WANTS TO KNOW about some book. He says he has been asked to get it for a friend. He reads me the title from a notebook. *Vabank* by Alexej Pludek. Why would anyone he knows outside Czechoslovakia want such trash? Perhaps he mixes with dissidents. In his notebook I glimpse the address of someone in Prague. Perhaps if he is taking out something he has also brought in something. Something like illegal manuscripts. I memorise the address; tonight I will telephone it to the police. "Ah, you want to buy *Vabank*", I say. "You know it has just been awarded our National Book Prize? It's all about Zionism. About the plot, begun in 1967 with the Six-Day War, continued in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and so on, for Jews to seize the governments of all the major world powers. A novel way of looking at the events of 1968, don't you agree? Oh! I believe I have just made a pun." I am beginning to enjoy myself. But both of my friends are looking uncomfortable. They do not know if I am serious or not. "I am not against the State of Israel, you understand", I say, "far from it. But I think it should only be a homeland for Hebrews. Not Khazars. You see, most people who call themselves Jews are really Khazars, descendants of a Black Sea tribe who converted to Judaism for political reasons and then dispersed through Europe. These are the people of the diaspora, not the Hebrews." What can they reply to that? "I'll tell you something else", I say, "about the Dead Sea. We're all led to believe that it's dead because it's full of salt. Yes! But no one says that there are ten different mineral salts in it. I'll tell you something. Those salts are worth more than America's entire annual gross national product. How do I know? Well, I spent years working on the Dead Sea. But I was forced to suppress my findings. Because what I knew would have started a Holy War! *Jihad*, the Arabs call it. On the strength of rumours of my work I was offered the directorship of Amman University. It is all documented. I have the letters at home somewhere."

It is apparent that Robert does not believe a word I am saying. He is not attempting to argue or contradict, he just wants to get away from me as quickly as possible. But I am enjoying myself too much. Did I not sense it was going to be a good day when I laid that near-perfect shit this morning? "My brother, you know, is looked on by the Arabs as a Prince", I inform the pair, "a fake one, of course, like Lawrence of Arabia. He entered Cairo as a sergeant in the Aussie

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

army sometime in '44—oh yes, he got out of Czechoslovakia in late '38—and right away met this little Arab boy. Hamil. And Hamil asks, 'What's your name, sergeant, you look more like one of us than an Aussie?' And my brother says, 'Saladin.' You see, it's the first Arab name that comes into his head. Hamil looks at him, and runs off. About an hour later there's 2,000 Arabs knocking on his quarters crying, 'Saladin!' And Hamil says to my brother, 'I've brought all your relatives to see you.' I have to tell you that on a certain day each year all the members of the Saladin family meet in Cairo. The very day that my brother showed up. There had been rumours. Stories that the head of the family had escaped the great massacre and fled to Australia. And here he was, returned. The next day there were newspaper headlines this high saying, 'Prince Saladin is Back!' After that my brother stayed on in Cairo. He became an agent. He got behind German lines. Smuggled hashish and secrets. When the war was over he became the leader of 20,000 students. I'll tell you, if it wasn't for my brother the whole of Cairo would have burned down in '52. You've heard of the Fires of Cairo? But my brother held his men under control. Nevertheless, Nasser had him tortured and thrown out. He was afraid of him."

ALL DICTATORS FEAR men who are popular. They must watch over the State like I monitor my body. They must counter any abnormality with severe repression; anti-Communists must be met with antibodies. Secret policemen are the pencillin of the nation. Like mould growing on the corpse of a loaf, there's a thought. When the body is purged the machine will run efficiently. I have heard that if ants cannot function properly they are taken away from the nest by three fellow-workers and destroyed; one holds down its legs, another flattens its abdomen, and the third injects it with poison. I am no insect, but I am frightened. Not of Germans or renegades, but of invisible germs; of a revolution within. The State does its best to ensure control of the future, but there is no guarantee; the best it can do is rearrange the past to suit itself, and to stabilise the present in such a way that it becomes, simultaneously, a reflection of both past and future, thus liable to strict checks. Six long black Russian limousines are edging down the road; the first flies the Hammer & Sickle. They are full of delegates to the Party Congress. Chubby men in grey homburgs with beige scarves in Vs around their necks and black overcoats buttoned right up; chaperoned and chauffeured by secret-service men; immunised against the world. They give me reassurance, but what a joy it would be to assassinate one of them. Suddenly I understand how the germs that I destroy daily must feel.

The two English tourists are too intrigued by this procession of the powerful to bother much over my latest monologue. "We must go now", says the girl in response to a look from Robert. "Wait!" I say, "I have one last thing to tell you."

That's got them! No confessions from me, though. I have something else in mind. "My brother lives in London now", I say. "I hear from him very often. He tells me that there is an excellent Czech resturant in London. You must visit it. They serve magnificent *knedliky*. And schnitzels like you've never tasted. Not made with veal, but with pork that's been beaten flat till it's as thin as a pancake. Oooh, my mouth is watering. It is situated in Hampstead, West Hampstead. The Czech National House. You know of it? Our airmen who flew with the RAF founded it after the war was over. There is a photograph of the Queen on the wall encrusted with diamonds. How do I know this? My brother tells me. He also writes that all the Jews in Golders Green come and eat there every night, because they are smart, and they know when they are on to a good thing. You will go there? Undoubtedly you will see my brother. He looks just like me. Can you do me one favour? I see that you have a camera around your neck. Will you take a photograph of me for my brother?"

Robert opens his camera case. He fiddles with the exposure meter, sets the speed and the correct aperture. He places the camera to his eye and twists the lens until he has me in sharp focus. I smile. The shutter clicks. And so on a small piece of celluloid is a picture of me. Preserving me for that single 1/60th of a second in my life when I am not afraid.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

George F. Kennan

Mr X Reconsiders

A Current Assessment of Soviet-American Relations

BEFORE WE MOVE to the substance of this discussion, I have to note a certain symmetry in the dates that relate to this occasion. It was just 60 years ago that there came into being the political régime in Russia with which we are now concerned. And it was exactly at the half-way point of that span of time—30 years ago—that I chanced to deliver, at a meeting of the Council on Foreign Relations, a talk on this same subject which became the basis for an article in the magazine *Foreign Affairs* signed by the pseudonym *X*. This article, as many of you will recall, attained a certain melancholy notoriety and has dogged my footsteps ever since, like a faithful but unwanted and somewhat embarrassing animal.

I trust this occasion will not have similar consequences; but this coincidence of chronology naturally leads me to reflect on the changes that have occurred since that year of 1947 in the background against which Soviet-American relations have had to proceed. The Russian political scene was then dominated by a single great personality—a man whom Churchill very aptly called a "crafty giant", a man of enormous political-tactical genius, a formidable opponent on anyone's terms, but one who in a portion of his psychic make-up was paranoiac and whose combination of paranoia with cruelty and political mastery had then served to create one of the great totalitarian monstrosities of our time: a personal despotism as ruthless and far-reaching as anything the modern world has ever known. By 1947 this despotism had already cost the Soviet peoples several millions of lives. And it had not stopped at the old Russian borders but had been extended —and this with our tacit American blessing—to nearly one-half of the remainder of the European continent.

And no one could be sure, in 1947, that it would stop there. The danger was not one of further military conquest. (Actually, it never has been that.) The problem was that Western Europe, still dazed, shaken, and jittery from the effects of the Hitlerian conquest, did not know what to expect. Its peoples lacked confidence in themselves. They had a tendency to rush for safety to the side of whoever they thought was likely to win in the end. They would have been quite capable of throwing themselves into the arms of their own Communist Parties—"to commit suicide" (as my friend Charles Bohlen used to say) "for fear of death"—if they gained the impression that those Communist Parties represented the wave of the future. To this had been added the fact that the Moscow centre, and Stalin personally, enjoyed at that time a total monopolistic control over the world Communist movement—a control which meant that any success by any Communist Party anywhere in seizing power within its own country had to be regarded as equivalent in its effects to a military conquest by the Soviet Union.

GEORGE F. KENNAN'S *reconsideration of his famous "Mr X" article, thirty years ago, which formulated the so-called Containment Policy for the US presence in a post-War Europe divided by Soviet and non-Communist spheres of influence, inaugurates a many-sided* ENCOUNTER *discussion. In the next numbers we will be publishing dissenting opinions from* RICHARD PIPES, LEOPOLD LABEDZ, *and* RICHARD LOWENTHAL.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IT IS ENOUGH TO CITE these circumstances, I think, to make clear the magnitude of the changes that have occurred in this 30-year interval. The Soviet Union remains, of course, an authoritarian state —much as was the pre-revolutionary Tsarist Russia. But there is very little to be seen today of the terror that prevailed in Stalin's time; and the régime is headed by a moderate, in fact, conservative man; a man who, whatever other failings of outlook he may have, is a man of the middle, a skilled balancer among political forces—a man confidently regarded by all who know him as a man of peace.

Moscow's monopoly of authority over the world Communist movement has been thoroughly disrupted—so much so that even in the case of those Communist parties that still ostensibly recognise the Soviet leadership, the lines of authority leading from Moscow are tenuous and incapable of bearing much weight. It is a case where the semblance of authority can be retained only by the sacrifice of much of the reality.

And finally, in place of the anxious, jittery Western Europe of 1947 we now have an area which is unquestionably the seat of some of the most successful civilisations, economically and socially, that the modern world has to show. The change, to be sure, has not been complete. People have not fully overcome the trauma of two World Wars. Many still lack confidence in themselves, see dangers on every hand, require to be reassured periodically, like frightened children. This situation has its military implications, and plays a part, of course, in Soviet-American relations. But it cannot be compared in seriousness and danger to the situation we faced in 1947.

NOW ALL THESE CHANGES, and others I might cite, have run in the direction of an improvement in the objective possibilities for a better Soviet-American relationship. This does not mean, of course, possibilities for a complete normalisation of those relations. For that there remain too many obstacles, historical, psychological, and ideological. There has always been, and remains today, an area in which no complete political intimacy is possible, where interests must remain competitive and, in part, conflicting.

But there is also another area, an area in which interests largely coincide and limited collaboration is possible. In the light of the changes I have just had occasion to note, this latter area has tended, slowly but steadily, to grow. And where sensible efforts have been put forward on both sides to take advantage of this situation, where people have tried, in other words, to create a balanced, business-like and realistic relationship between two very disparate political systems—the results, given patience and persistence, have not been discouraging. This was true, among others, in the period of the Nixon-Kissinger *détente*. Progress was made in a number of fields which was more than negligible and from which both sides are continuing to benefit today. The fact that these achievements were somewhat over-dramatised, that they led to unreal expectations—and gave rise to some disillusionment when these expectations were not met—should not blind us to their positive residue.

NEVERTHELESS, THE EFFORT to pursue a balanced and useful middle course in the relationship with Russia has never been an easy one for American policy-makers to follow; and one of the main reasons why this has been so difficult is that seldom, if ever, have we had an adequate consensus in American opinion on the nature of the problem and the most promising ways of approaching it.

Prior to the late 1940s—prior, that is, to the Korean War and the death of Stalin—the difficulty seemed to come primarily from the left: from people who had a naive, over-trusting, over-idealistic view of what was then Stalinist power—people who thought it really possible for this country to ingratiate itself with the Stalin régime by various one-sided gestures of confidence and generosity and reproached our government for not doing so. It was, incidentally, against this sort of Left-wing deviation that my *X* article—and the policy of Containment—was directed.

But since Stalin's death, the opposition to an even-handed and realistic policy toward Russia has tended to come from the opposite end of the political spectrum: from people who were unable to see the curious mix of the negative and the positive, of the discouraging and the hopeful, in the Soviet political personality—people who could see only the negative, and who feared the consequences of anything less than a total rejection and hostility from our side. There has never been a time in these last 25 years, it seems to me, when this opposition has not made itself felt. There has never been a time when American statesmen concerned to find and develop a constructive middle-ground in relations with Russia

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have not felt their efforts harassed from that direction.

And the harassment has not been minor in intensity or in power. Every administration has been to some extent afraid of that hard-line opposition. It has behind it the power of chauvinist rhetoric as well as that of strict military logic. It has the capability of hurling at any and all opponents the charge of being "soft on Communism"; and however meaningless this phrase may be, it is a formidable weapon in a society unhappily vulnerable to the power of the slogan.

"MAD", or PAR for the Course

Washington DC

A DIPLOMAT AND I *were trading spoonfuls of alphabet soup. Did NATO feel a new SALT agreement would help MBFR? Could PGMs hold off Soviet armor, or was it necessary to upgrade the TNW with ER warheads? Could we trade changes in the FBS for Soviet cuts in their IRBM/MRBM forces? Should we be content with ALCMs or must we also have GLCMs and SLCMs?*

My friend interrupted in exasperation: "Ugh, I call that sort of thing 'acronymphomania.'" The term serves nicely.

DISCUSSIONS OF *national security affairs are overloaded with abbreviations, terms of art and shorthand phrases that identify the insider and fend off the outsider from active participation. In particular, the addiction to acronyms is as much a mechanism to shield the experts from lay interlopers as a means to economize in the description of complex problems. As in other fields, acquaintance with the jargon is the price of admission to the arena. It may also induce a kind of narcosis, lulling the critical faculty of newcomers. Mastering the vocabulary is easier than thinking originally about the chronic dilemmas of security policy in the nuclear age.*

Vocabulary is not the main problem, but sometimes it shrouds rather than illuminates the real questions of defense and security. And it is a dense barrier to public consideration of issues to which, knowingly or not, citizens must pledge their lives, fortunes and honor.

There is no mild case of the illness. Some cases, however, are more pernicious than others and demand corrective surgery. The most damaging acronym in the lexicon of national security is MAD —Mutual Assured Destruction.

THE CONCEPT *evolved from the early 1960s when Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara defined "assured destruction" as a necessary capability of U.S. strategic forces. After any feasible attack against the U.S., our forces would have to be able to retaliate by inflicting "unacceptable damage" on the aggressor—to assure the destruction of the attacker as a viable society. This retaliatory threat was designed to deter any adversary, particularly the Soviet Union, from launching a nuclear strike in the first place. As Soviet strategic forces grew, it appeared that deterrence was most stable when each superpower possessed an invulnerable retaliatory force to hold the other's cities hostage. Hence, a reliable strategic balance required "Mutual Assured Destruction."*

POLITICS RELIES HEAVILY **on symbolic communication, and the suggestive quality of the label MAD has given it unusual potency in popular and professional discussions of nuclear strategy. It is a term so freighted with emotion that it seriously distorts public discourse. It lends itself to caricature. It focuses on means, rather than ends. It implies that a policy limiting nuclear weapons to a retaliatory role actually favors wholesale murder, when its real aim is to discourage any use of such indiscriminate weaponry. In short, MAD obscures the true objectives of American strategic doctrine.**

Mutual vulnerability is a technological fact, not a political ideal. It is a condition that must be managed, and effective management requires a concept that highlights the goal we actually seek. Equally important, as the United States and the Soviet Union attempt through negotiation to coordinate their strategic programs, the guiding concept should be one to which both parties can readily subscribe. MAD is not that concept.

EVIDENTLY, WE NEED ANOTHER IDEA—*and, to be absolutely frank about it, another acronym. And no less evidently, I have one in mind. "Programmed Assured Restraint" (PAR) strikes me as a preferable formulation. It emphasizes that our principal aim is to moderate political and military behavior, not to bandy inflammatory threats. It calls attention to the perpetual need for governing the destructive forces in our possession. It encompasses both capabilities and intentions.*

Furthermore, PAR implies that restraint can best be assured if it is mutual and programmed through suitable negotiations. As both concept and label, "Programmed Assured Restraint" accommodates the Soviet insistence that the first principle of strategic-arms control should be equal security, rather than Mutual Assured Destruction. PAR is a far more promising rubric under which to conduct future rounds of strategic-arms diplomacy. It could help expand the range of agreement on nuclear-weapons doctrine.

As aficionados know, PAR used to mean "Perimeter Acquisition Radar", a system that was effectively put out of business by the 1972 treaty limiting anti-ballistic-missile defenses. We should salvage the label for better use. "Programmed Assured Restraint" is no cure for acronymphomania but, in trying to beat swords into plowshares, at least we can begin by recycling an old acronym.

Alton Frye

in the WASHINGTON POST

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THE HEYDAY OF the Nixon-Kissinger *détente*, this opposition was almost silenced—partly by Richard Nixon's formidable credentials as a hard-liner, which bewildered many critics; and partly by Henry Kissinger's diplomatic fireworks, which dazzled them. But the resulting silence was one of frustration, not of acceptance. When Watergate drained the authority of this political combination, the opposition broke forth once again with redoubled strength and violence.

It has raged over the entire period from 1975 to the present. It sufficed to knock out the 1974 trade agreement and to lower the level of Soviet-American trade. It sufficed to delay the approach to a new SALT Agreement. And it has achieved today, against the background of a new administration and a somewhat unstructured Congress, a power it never had before. It now claims to have—and for all I know it does have—the power to veto any Soviet-American agreements in the military or the economic field that do not meet with its requirements; and such are its requirements that I come increasingly to suspect that this means in effect: any conceivable agreements at all.

I HAVE MADE my best efforts to understand the rationale of this opposition. Many of the bearers of it are my friends. I know them as honourable people. I do not suspect, or disrespect, their motives.

It is clear that we have to do here with a complex phenomenon, not a simple one. This body of opinion embraces some people whose trouble seems to be that they are unaware of the changes to which I referred a few moments ago as between 1947 and 1977, who talk of the problems of Soviet-American relations in terms identical with those used at the height of the Cold War—who sometimes seem in fact unaware that Stalin is dead.

Then there are others whose emotions have been aroused over the question of Human Rights, or of Jewish emigration, and who would like to see American policy directed not to an accommodation to Soviet power as it is but to the changing of the very nature of the Soviet régime.

More important, however, than either of these are the people who view the relationship exclusively as one of military rivalry—who see in it no significant values or issues or possibilities other than ones relating to the supposed determination of the Soviet leadership to achieve some sort of decisive military ascendancy over the NATO coalition—and this, of course, with the most menacing and deadly of intent. These include outstandingly the military planners, whose professional obligation it is to set up a planner's dummy of any possible military opponent, to endow that dummy with just the motivation I have described, and then to treat it as if it were real. But this group also includes many non-military people who, accepting this dummy as the reality, lose themselves in the fantastic reaches of what I might call military mathematics—the mathematics of possible mutual destruction in an age of explosively burgeoning weapons technology.

I HAVE MADE MY EFFORTS to understand the arguments of these military enthusiasts. I have tried to follow them through the mazes of their intricate and sophisticated calculations of possible military advantage at various future points in time. I have tried to follow them in their recital of the letters and numbers of various weapons systems, some real, some imagined; their comparisons of the reputed capacities of these systems; their computations of the inter-actions of them in situations of actual hostility.

I come away from this exercise frustrated, and with two overpowering impressions. The first is that this entire science of long-range massive destruction—of calculated advantage or disadvantage in modern weaponry—has gotten seriously out of hand; that the variables, the complexities, the uncertainties it involves are rapidly growing beyond the power of either human mind or computer.

But my second impression is that there is a distinct unreality about this whole science of destruction—unreality, that is, when you view it as the plane on which our differences over policy have to be resolved. I doubt that we are going to solve our problems by trying to agree as to whether the Russians will or will not have the capability of "taking out" our land-based missiles at some time in the 1980s. I doubt that this is the heart of the problem. I suspect that something deeper is here involved. And if I had to try to define that deeper something, I would have to say that it is the view one takes of the nature of the Soviet leadership and of the discipline exerted upon it by its own experiences, problems, and political necessities.

THERE ARE BASICALLY two views of leadership: two ways in which it is seen in this country.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In one of these views, the Soviet leaders appear as a terrible and forbidding group of men: monsters of sorts, really, because lacking in all elements of common humanity—men totally dedicated either to the destruction or to the political undoing and enslavement of this country and its allies—men who have all internal problems, whether of civic obedience or of economic development, essentially solved and are therefore free to spend their time evolving elaborate schemes for some ultimate military showdown—men who are prepared to accept the most tremendous risks, and to place upon their people the most fearful sacrifices, if only in this way their programme of destruction or domination of ourselves and our allies can be successfully carried forward.

That is one view. In the other view, these leaders are seen as a group of quite ordinary men, to some extent the victims, if you will, of the ideology on which they have been reared, but shaped far more importantly by the discipline of the responsibilities they and their predecessors have borne as rulers of a great country in the modern technological age. They are seen, in this view, as highly conservative men, perhaps the most conservative ruling group to be found anywhere in the world, markedly advanced in age, approaching the end of their tenure, and given to everything else but rash adventure. They are seen as men who share the horror of major war that dominates most of the Soviet people, who have no desire to experience another military conflagration and no intention to launch one—men more seriously concerned to preserve the present limits of their political power and responsibility than to expand those limits—men whose motivation is essentially defensive and whose attention is riveted primarily to the unsolved problems of economic development within their own country. They are seen as men who suffer greatly under the financial burden which the maintenance of the present bloated arsenals imposes on the Soviet economy, and who would like to be relieved of that burden if this could be accomplished without undue damage to Russia's security and to their own political prestige. They are seen, finally, as men who are, to be sure, seldom easy to deal with, who care more about appearances than about reality, who have an unfortunate fixation about secrecy which complicates their external relations in many ways, but who, despite all these handicaps, have good and sound reason, rooted in their own interests, for desiring a peaceful and constructive relationship with the United States within the area where that is theoretically possible.

I WOULD SUBMIT that it is these two conflicting views of the Soviet leadership that lie at the heart of the conflict between those in our government who are attempting to make progress in our relations with the Soviet Union and those who are attacking this effort from the Right. And the burden of what I have to say is that I think we can no longer permit this great conflict of outlook and opinion to go on in so large degree unreconciled as it has gone in recent years—that the moment has come when we can no longer carry on safely or effectively in our relations with the Soviet Union without the creation of a much wider consensus of opinion behind our policies of the moment than anything we have known in this recent period.

WE STAND at a crucial point in Soviet-American relations. The expiration of the 1972 SALT Agreement has confronted us with fundamental decisions. Either we move forward, boldly, confidently, and imaginatively, to the creation of a new relationship with that country in the military field, or we deliver up ourselves and the rest of the civilised world to the appalling dangers of a nuclear weapons race totally out of control—a development devoid of any visible hopeful end, devoid of any imaginable end at all other than a wholly disastrous and apocalyptic one.

But our ability to pursue the more hopeful of these alternatives is today seriously jeopardised by lack of the consensus to which I just referred. The opposition now being brought to bear against the efforts of the President and the Secretary of State to carry forward negotiations in the field of the limitation of armaments has reached a degree of intensity that seems to me to exceed anything we have known in the past. Powerful efforts are being made—the tendency of which is not to bring about the failure of ratification of instruments already negotiated (nobody could object to that as a matter of procedure) but to discredit the very process of negotiation, and this at a very early stage. People are being attacked not for what they are known to have done in the negotiating process but for what they are presumed capable of doing—presumed capable on the basis

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of rumour or of calculated leak. They are being attacked, in other words, not for their actions but for their supposed intentions.

I am not questioning the motivation for these attacks. I can conceive that it may be, in many instances, of the highest. But I find myself wondering whether effective negotiations can be conducted in the face of opposition of this nature, particularly when we, as well as our Soviet counterparts, are being assured daily that the people who carry forward this opposition have not only the political power to torpedo any agreements or understandings that might realistically be arrived at, but also the firm intention to do so. Negotiating policy it seems to me cannot be effectively made or implemented against such a background.

AND THIS PRESENT MOMENT is one at which we simply cannot afford to have the force and momentum of our policy lamed in this manner. The stakes are too high. The penalties of failure are too serious. The implications of such a failure would carry even farther than just the prospect of an unlimited weapons race. A breakdown of the relationship on the military level could not fail to have—indeed, has already had to some extent—effects on other levels as well. And here, too, we have—and the world has—too much to lose to permit such a failure to occur.

We face in this coming period a tragically high probability of deepening crises in Southern Africa and in the Middle East. It may well be that the peace of the world will depend, as these crises develop, on the ability of the American and Soviet governments to remain in close communication, to give each other reasonable reassurance as to their intentions, and to co-ordinate their actions with a view to preventing local conflicts from growing to global dimensions.

Beyond this, we have the fact that these coming years are bound to see extensive changes in political leadership at the Soviet end. Nothing could be more unfortunate, surely, than that a new and inexperienced team of leaders should come into power in the Soviet Union confronting what would appear to be a blank wall of hostility and rejection at the American end—a situation in the face of which they would see no choice but to look for alternatives other than those of good relations with the United States. This is no time to foreclose other people's options, and particularly not the options of people new to the experience of power and obliged to define new lines of policy that may represent commitments for many years to come.

THESE, THEN, ARE THE REASONS why it appears to me as an inescapable necessity that we should move promptly and resolutely to the achievement of a more workable consensus behind our policy towards the Soviet Union to take the place of the resounding disagreements that affect, and threaten to paralyse, the formulation and execution of policy in this field today.

I realise, of course, that it is easier to call attention to the need for such a consensus than to chart out the ways in which it could be achieved.

I realise, too, that behind a certain portion of this critical opinion there are commitments of an emotional or political or professional nature which are unlikely to be overcome by appeals to mere reason, and which will have to be confronted, as a political problem, by the responsible political leaders.

But in another portion of this spectrum we have to do with sincerely held and rational opinions, with conclusions drawn from what people believe to be the facts—from the spectrum of facts, or supposed facts, that they now have before them. I wonder whether, in the case of these people in particular, approaches and devices could not be found, approaches and devices of a basically intellectual nature, which would help us importantly, and possibly even decisively, to get on with the solution of this problem. The problem is, after all, a cognitive one; and there is no reason why men of good will should not be able to come to some elements of agreement on the implications for policy of a given body of factual material if they can be brought to a common acceptance of its validity.

And here there are, as I see it, two requirements. First of all, I would propose that we lay aside completely, at least for the moment and for purposes of this exercise, the whole question of the military relationship and all the arguments about *who* could conceivably do *what* to *whom* if their intentions were of the nastiest; and that we elevate our vision, at least for the time being, to the question of the real nature and situation of the particular foreign power we are dealing with.

And then, starting with that resolution, it seems to me that I can see in my mind's eye a series of private gatherings in which would be included not only high-level policy-makers of the moment but leading figures of this opposition as well as

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

possibly a few of the others of us who are interested in Russian affairs—gatherings where we would come together not primarily to discuss matters among ourselves, not to air our prejudices and convictions on the basis of our present knowledge and our present ignorance, but where we would all listen humbly to what could be told to us by the most experienced and knowledgeable people who could be found in the respective fields. (I avoid the word "expert" because it implies something more narrow than what I have in mind.)

WHAT I AM THINKING OF, in other words, is a certain process of re-education in the realities of Soviet power and leadership—a common effort on the part of all of us who have been prominently involved in this debate—a process in which we would check our existing views at the door, together with our hats, and would listen and ask questions and try to get a new view of the facts before we drew conclusions. I suspect that in an experience of this nature, designed not to promote the clash of old views but to make possible the common development of new, more realistic and more up-to-date ones, we would come closer than in any other way to the composing of our differences.

And there is room for this, I assure you, because no more in the Soviet Union than anywhere else have things been standing still. There are available to us today masses of new factual material on conditions in the Soviet Union—material which, given the rather low state of Soviet studies in the USA today, have scarcely been digested by the scholars, much less by the policy-makers, the critics, and the old-timers in this field of expertise.

And in this latter category, I include myself. I am much aware that it is exactly fifty years ago this year that I entered on my own career as a so-called Russian expert, and I think that because of this long preoccupation with the subject—not despite it, mark you, but precisely because of it—it is time that my ideas, too, were taken thoroughly apart and put together again with relation, this time, to the present scene, and not to all the memories I cherish, and all the anecdotes I have been accustomed to telling, about the earlier years.

Such seminars would not, I think, serve their purpose unless they were the product of very high-level initiative and enthusiasm within the US Administration. But if that initiative and enthusiasm were there, the institutional facilities to organise and accommodate them would not be hard to find.

THAT IS THE BURDEN of the song I have come to sing. I am suggesting that the angry controversies over policy towards Russia that are now marring our public debates and threatening the success of any and all American policies towards that country are not to be solved within the terms of the argument as it is now being conducted, that a solution lies only in a common act of humility—only in the confession that none of us knows too much about what we are talking about—only in the willingness to stop at this point and to learn a little more before we shout each other down. Only in this act of humility will we find the way to a future of Soviet-American relations that offers hope rather than horror.

Waste Ground near a Bridge

Whoever is paying ground-rent for this square
Of obsolete floor-space may be at a loss
Or planning a car-park. Meanwhile the lot
Is straining to be a field, as once it was,
Tufts rooting in corners where the seeds brushed in.
Exposed beyond it, arch by arch, the bridge
Is balancing in the prints of stepping-stones.

Frank Ormsby

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

F. A. Hayek

The Miscarriage of the Democratic Ideal

IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE to ignore that more and more thoughtful and well-meaning people are slowly losing their faith in what was to them once the inspiring ideal of democracy.

This is happening at the same time as, and in part perhaps in consequence of, a constant extension of the field to which the principle of democracy is being applied. But the growing doubts are clearly not confined to these obvious abuses of a political ideal but concern its true core. Most of those who are disturbed by their loss of trust in a hope which has long guided them, wisely keep their mouths shut. But my alarm about this state makes me speak out. It seems to me that the disillusionment which so many experience is not due to a failure of the principle of democracy as such but to our having tried it the wrong way. It is because I am anxious to rescue the true ideal from the miscredit into which it is falling that I am trying to find out what the mistake was that we made and how we can prevent the bad consequences of democratic procedure which we have observed.

To avoid disappointment, of course, any ideal has to be approached in a sober spirit; and in the case of democracy in particular we must not forget that the word refers solely to a particular method of government. It meant originally no more than a certain procedure for arriving at political decisions and tells us nothing about what the aims of government ought to be. Yet as the only method of peaceful change of government which men have yet discovered it is nevertheless precious and worth fighting for.

YET IT IS NOT DIFFICULT to see why the outcome of the democratic process in its present form must bitterly disappoint those who believed in the principle that government should be guided by the opinion of the majority.

Though some still claim that this is now the case, it is too obviously not true to deceive observant persons. Never, indeed, in the whole of history were governments so much under the necessity of satisfying the particular wishes of numerous special interests as is true of governments today. Critics of present democracy like to speak of "mass-democracy." But if democratic government were really bound to what the masses agree upon there would be little to object to. It is not that the governments serve an agreed opinion of the majority, but that they are bound to serve the several interests of a conglomerate of numerous groups which is the cause of the complaints. It is at least conceivable, though unlikely, that an autocratic government will exercise self-restraint; but an omnipotent democratic government simply cannot do so. If its powers are not limited, it simply cannot confine itself to serving the agreed views of the majority of the electorate. It will be forced to bring together and keep together a majority by satisfying the demands of a multitude of special interests, each of which will consent to the special benefits granted to other groups only at the price of their own special interests being equally considered. Such a bargaining democracy has nothing to do with the conceptions which were used to justify the principle of democracy.

WHEN I SPEAK HERE of the necessity of democratic government being limited, or more briefly of limited democracy, I do, of course, not mean that the part of government which is conducted democratically should be limited, but that *all* government, but especially if it be democratic, should be limited. The reason is that democratic government, if nominally omnipotent, becomes as a result exceedingly weak, the playball of all the separate interests it has to satisfy to secure majority support.

How has the situation come about?

For two centuries, from the end of absolute

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

monarchy to the rise of unlimited democracy, the great aim of constitutional government had been the limitation of all governmental powers. The chief principles which were gradually established to prevent all arbitrary exercise of power were the separation of powers, the rule or sovereignty of law, government under the law, the distinction between private and public law, and the rules of judicial procedure. They all served to define and limit the conditions under which any coercion of individuals was admissible. Coercion was thought to be justified only in the general interest, and only coercion according to uniform rules equally applicable to all were thought to be in the general interest.

ALL THESE GREAT LIBERAL PRINCIPLES were given second rank and were half forgotten when it came to be believed that democratic control of government made unnecessary any other safeguards against the arbitrary use of power. The old principles were not so much forgotten as their traditional verbal expression deprived of meaning by a gradual change of the key words used in them. The most important of the crucial terms on which the meaning of the classical formulae of liberal constitutionalism turned was the term "*Law*"; and all the old principles lost their significance as the content of this term was changed.

To the founders of constitutionalism the term "Law" had had a very precise narrow meaning and only from limiting government by law in this sense was the protection of individual liberty expected. As the philosophers of law in the 19th century finally defined it, it meant rules regulating the conduct of persons towards others, applicable to an unknown number of future instances and containing prohibitions delimiting (but of course not specifying) the boundaries of the protected domain of all persons and organised groups.[1] Law was meant to prevent unjust conduct, and justice referred to principles equally applicable to all and was contrasted to all specific commands or privileges referring to particular individuals and groups. But who still believes today, as James Madison could two hundred years ago, that the House of Representatives would be unable to make any "law which will not have its full operation on themselves and their friends, as well as the great mass of society"?

WHAT HAPPENED with the apparent victory of the democratic ideal was that the power of laying down laws and the governmental power of issuing directions were placed into the hands of the same assemblies. The effect of this was necessarily that the supreme governmental authority became free to give itself currently whatever laws helped it best to achieve the particular purposes of the moment. But it necessarily meant the end of the principle of government *under* the law. While it was reasonable enough to demand that not only legislation proper but also governmental measures should be determined by democratic procedure, placing both powers into the hands of the same assembly (or assemblies) meant in effect return to unlimited government.

It also invalidated the original belief that a democracy, because it had to obey the majority, could only do what was in the general interest. That would have been true of a body which could give only general laws or decide on issues of truly general interest. But it is not only *not* true but outright *impossible* for a body which has unlimited powers and must use them to buy the votes of particular interests, including those of some small groups or even powerful individuals. Such a body, which does not owe its authority to demonstrating its belief in the justice of its decisions by committing itself to general rules, is constantly under the necessity of rewarding the support by the different groups by special advantages conceded to them.

THE RESULT OF THIS DEVELOPMENT was not merely that government was no longer under the law. It also brought it about that the concept of law itself lost its meaning. The so-called legislature was no longer (as John Locke had thought it should be) confined to giving laws in the sense of general rules. *Everything* the "legislature" resolved came to be called "law", and it was no longer called "legislature" because it gave laws, but "laws" became the name for everything which emanated from the "legislature." The hallowed term "law" thus lost all its old meaning, and it became the name for the commands of

[1] After long discussions in which especially the German jurisprudents had at last elaborated this definition of what they called "law in the material sense", it was in the end suddenly abandoned for what now must seem an almost comic objection. Under this definition the rules of a constitution would not be law in the material sense.

But they are, of course, not rules of conduct but rules for the organisation of government, and like all public law are apt to change frequently while private (and criminal) law can last.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

what the fathers of constitutionalism would have called arbitrary government. Government became the main business of "legislature" and legislation subsidiary to it.

THE TERM "ARBITRARY" no less lost its classical meaning. The word had meant "rule-less" or determined by particular will rather than according to recognised rules. In this true sense even the decision of an autocratic ruler may be lawful and the decision of a democratic majority entirely arbitrary. Even Rousseau, who is chiefly responsible for bringing into political usage the unfortunate conception of "will", understood at least occasionally that, to be just, this will must be *general in intent*. But the decisions of the majorities in contemporary legislative assemblies need, of course, not have that attribute. Anything goes if it only increases the number of votes supporting governmental measures.

An omnipotent sovereign parliament, not confined to laying down general rules, means that we have an arbitrary government; and, what is worse, a government which cannot, even if it wished, obey any principles, but that must maintain itself by handing out special favours to particular groups. It must buy its authority by discrimination. Unfortunately the British Parliament which had been the model for most representative institutions also introduced the idea of the sovereignty (*i.e.* omnipotence) of Parliament. But the sovereignty of the law and the sovereignty of an unlimited Parliament are irreconcilable. Yet today, when Mr Enoch Powell claims that "a Bill of Rights is incompatible with the free constitution of this country", Mr Gallagher hastens to assure him that he understands that and agrees with Mr Powell.[2]

It turns out that the Americans two hundred years ago were right and an almighty Parliament means the death of the freedom of the individual. Apparently a free constitution no longer means the freedom of the individual but *a licence to the majority in Parliament to act as arbitrarily as it pleases*. We can either have a free Parliament or a free people. Personal freedom requires that all authority is restrained by long run principles which the opinion of the people approves.

IT TOOK SOME TIME for those consequences of unlimited democracy to show themselves.

For a while the traditions developed during the period of liberal constitutionalism continued to operate as a restraint on the extent of governmental power. Of course, wherever these forms of democracy were imitated in parts of the world where no such traditions existed, they invariably broke down soon. But in the countries that had had longer experience with representative government the traditional barriers to arbitrary use of power were at first penetrated from entirely benevolent motives. Discrimination to assist the least fortunate did not seem to be discrimination. (More recently we even invented the nonsense word "underprivileged" to conceal this.) But in order to put people who are inevitably very different in many of the conditions on which their worldly success depends into a more equal material position it is necessary to treat them unequally.

Yet to break the principle of *equal treatment under the law* even for charity's sake inevitably opened the floodgates to arbitrariness. To disguise it the pretence of the formula of "social justice" was resorted to; nobody knows precisely what it means but for that very reason it served as the magic wand which broke down all barriers to partial measures. Dispensing gratuities at the expense of somebody else who cannot be readily identified became the most attractive way of buying majority support. But a parliament or government which becomes a charitable institution thereby becomes exposed to irresistible blackmail. And it soon ceases to be the "deserts" but becomes exclusively the "political necessity" which determines which groups are to be favoured at general expense.

THIS LEGALISED CORRUPTION is not the fault of the politicians who cannot avoid it if they are to gain positions in which they can do any good, but a built-in feature of any system in which majority support authorises any special measure assuaging particular discontent. While both a legislature confined to laying down general rules and a governmental agency which can use coercion only to enforce general rules which it cannot change can resist such pressure, an omnipotent assembly can not. Deprived of all power of discretionary coercion, government might, of

[2] House of Commons, 17 May 1977. There would in fact be no need for a catalogue of protected rights, but merely of the single restriction of all governmental power that no coercion was permissible except to enforce obedience to laws as defined before. That would include all the recognised fundamental rights and more.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

course, still discriminate in rendering services—but this would be less harmful and could be more easily prevented. But once central government possesses no power of discriminatory coercion, most services could be and probably should be delegated to regional or local corporations competing for inhabitants by providing better services at lower costs.

IT SEEMS CLEAR that a nominally unlimited ("sovereign") representative assembly must be progressively driven into a steady and unlimited extension of the powers of government. It appears equally clear that this can be prevented only by dividing the supreme power between two distinct democratically elected assemblies, i.e. by applying the principle of the separation of powers on the highest level.

Of course, two such distinct assemblies would have to be differently composed if the legislative one is to represent the *opinion* of the people about which sorts of government actions are just and which are not, and the other were to be guided by the *will* of the people on the particular measures to be taken within the frame of rules laid down by the first. For this second, governmental task, —which has been the main occupation of existing parliaments—their practices and organisation have become well adapted, especially with their organisation on party lines which is indeed indispensable for conducting government.

But it was not without reason that the great political thinkers of the 18th century were without exception deeply distrustful of party divisions in a true legislature. It can hardly be denied that the existing parliaments are largely unfit for legislation proper. They have neither time nor the right to approach it.

I HAVE on various occasions sketched a possible organisation for such a democratic legislature and hope soon to publish a full account of it.[3] This plan, which I have worked out over many years, is, however, unquestionably only one way in which the aim can be achieved. Here I am concerned solely with the general principle on which I have no remaining doubts: the absolute necessity of dividing in some manner the supreme power between two different and mutually wholly independent democratic assemblies with entirely distinct and sharply separated functions.

A reform of the House of Lords might offer an opportunity for a move in that direction.

[3] See chapters 7, 8 and 10 of my *New Studies on Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), and the forthcoming third volume of my *Law, Legislation and Liberty*.

Brown

that was safe once (nipple, sponge, sandpit,
moulting of pets grown up with by the river,
"this giant oak planted in 1810 . . .")

or that hoarded light for the vain gleam of itself
(her tanned brow, her hazel eyes and hair,
the henna of leaves we walked through thinking
"This at least is good—this will go on")

has not gone on, not in that way
(summons vast helmeted hordes crossing a plain,
shit, desert, bored marriages in hessian rooms,
the chill walnut of a mountainside)

leaves meanings only the last discover
(dust, old photographs, mahogany and yew,
the still water of commemorative jars).

Blake Morrison

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tony Weston

Internal Former for a New Kiln

"That's all it's fit for, burning;
you're welcome;
take it off our hands."

I scavenge round the sodden piles
of floors and roofs,
loose boards and doors

dumped, in the grass. Wet-rot
fruits orange,
dry-rot spreads white hands

to grope the peeling, blistered paint.
Its lifeless green
labels these as Army huts.

The door, though heavy, six by four,
inch-thick, just right
for the inside wall I lack.

Load-up, drive-off, unload at home.
The door is yellow
on the other side . . . evoking

beds, whose owners size me up
as I come in,
staring past me at the closing door.

Turning to read it, I see why.
Fresh as blood,
DEATH TO JEWS. Underneath

there's more, much more; S.S.,
A gallows,
instructions for a Yid to follow.

Uneasily I laugh, and turn again . . .
I'm not a Jew!
But beds and men are now

dispersed. The hut dismembered
years ago; its
messages put out to grass.

In case my daughter reads and asks
I fetch a scraper.
Underneath the wood glows bare.

A smell of pinewood barbs the air . . .
Auschwitz,
or Belsen, or Buchenwald?

Mere nightmares to a child,
born lucky,
of an island race. Catenary,

the new kiln-arch, the inverse
of free-falling chain,
nailed left and right on the pottery-wall.

The door is cut, yellow inwards . . .
all it's fit for,
burning . . . the bared skin bubbling.

Masses of smoke will come
from such kindling,
though no choking stench of bone.

When it is done, I shall discover
a hushed, dry shrine,
a place of making, of prayers ascending . . .

walk in now, over the soft, warm ashes;
you're welcome,
with your white, spread hands.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

R. S. Thomas

Two Poems

Art

It was a bad time
for it. The poets descended
to prose musings; novelists took over
the weedy allotments

of the muse. The manufacturers'
pressure increased: Name me, the
articles cried to the toiling
vocabularies. In expensive

studios passionless painters
made with immense care
small marks on a large
canvas. In back rooms

of the imagination composers
dismantled the rusty machinery
of their technique. The effects
pleased them; they were called: Études.

The Verdict

I think he sits at that strange table
of Eddington's, that is not a table
at all, but nodes and molecules
pushing against molecules
and nodes; and he writes there
in invisible handwriting the instructions
the genes follow. I imagine his
face that is more the face
of a clock, and the time told by it
is now, though Greece is referred
to and Egypt and empires
not yet begun.
And I would have
things to say to this God
at the judgment, storming at him
as Job stormed with the eloquence
of the abused heart. But there will be
no judgment other than the verdict
of his calculations, that abstruse
geometry that proceeds eternally
in the silence that is beyond right and wrong.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Column

THE TITLE of Diana Trilling's book,[1] as one of the collected articles of which it consists, is taken from Walt Whitman's poem, *Pioneers! O Pioneers!*:

For we cannot tarry here
We must march, my darlings, we must bear the brunt of danger
We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,
Pioneers! O Pioneers!

No doubt Mrs Trilling's use of the quotation is ironical, as there is little in her book of that dizzy and limitless optimism which inspired Whitman's poem and gave it what a disabused European might be tempted to think its distinctive quality of Americanism.

Have the elder races halted?
Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there beyond the seas?
We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,
Pioneers! O Pioneers!

Yet if there is a world of difference between the manner in which Whitman and Mrs Trilling each address themselves to the potentialities of being an American, Mrs Trilling's title is in some ways still marvellously appropriate to her subject matter, for the studies, articles, reviews collected here are all concerned, in one way or another, with a decade, from 1964 to 1974, when indeed it seemed for a moment as if all America were on a pioneering path as daring and dangerous as any frontiersman's who helped to push back the boundaries of the United States from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Only by this time, of course, the geographical frontier had been closed, and it was not to the exploration of a continent that Mrs Trilling's darlings set themselves, but to a no less exhilarating psychological journey into the interior, into the Wild West of the American psyche. As applied to this journey, some of Whitman's verses acquire slightly sinister overtones which do not belong to the original.

Come, my tanned-faced children,
Follow well in order, get your weapons ready,
Have you your pistols? have you your sharp-edged axes?
Pioneers! O Pioneers!

The lines might just as well have been addressed by Charles Manson to his followers, as by Whitman to his fellow-believers in the American Dream.

GIVEN THE PERIOD with which her book is concerned, it is appropriate that *We Must March My Darlings* should open with a lament on the death of President Kennedy, because, at the time at least, to millions of Americans, including Mrs Trilling, the assassination of the President, young, brilliant, with a glamour which conquered every generous heart, seemed to constitute a watershed, from which the waters ever since ran downhill until they reached the miasmic swamps of Viet Nam and Watergate.

It is not difficult to see why, from the point of view of Mrs Trilling and many others, this should have been so. President Kennedy, with his youth, his sympathy with the arts, his desire to achieve excellence in all things, inspired the hope of mending the breach between the intellectual life of America and the practical and dirty business of politics which Henry Adams had deplored over a hundred years before, and also of providing a bridge between the hard, go-getting acquisitiveness of Ugly America and the idealistic impulses of a younger generation which had been born out of the war and the immense extension of higher education which had followed it. Lions and lambs would lie down together, and out of their reconciliation there would arise a new society in which America's best and brightest dreams would be realised. Art, science, philosophy would come to the aid of politics, and politics would learn that America's business was not merely business but to give practical effect to the teachings of the wise and the good.

It was a beautiful dream, but alas! a brief one, and even before Kennedy's death doubts had begun to arise whether it would ever be realised, or indeed whether Kennedy himself was the man to realise it. But his assassination brought it to so abrupt and tragic an end, that it seemed to be swept away overnight, and the breaches which Kennedy had seemed to surmount, between youth and age, between business and idealism, between politics and the life of the mind, between self-interest and altruism, seemed to gape wider than ever.

I DOUBT IF Mrs Trilling, with the benefit of hindsight, would today write about Kennedy in quite such celebratory and ecstatic tones as she did in the immediate aftermath of his assassination. In retrospect, his administration fell considerably short of many of the ideals it professed to follow, time has somewhat tarnished Kennedy's glamour as the Knight of the White House, *sans peur et sans reproche*, while many of the intellectuals he recruited into his administration seem merely to

[1] *We Must March My Darlings*. By DIANA TRILLING. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $10, £6.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have exemplified Lord Acton's famous dictum in an even more extreme form, that even a little power corrupts absolutely.

Yet, even so, her essay registers with particular poignancy the sense of loss, of dismay in some cases mounting to despair, of bewilderment approaching panic, which was felt by most Americans on the morning after Kennedy's death.

> "From the start, during the pitiless weekend which began with the news of the killing and culminated in the funeral, our response was of a kind which we usually reserve for our most intimate bereavements. People whom we wouldn't expect to cry were weeping. The nonreligious went to church or wished they could. Even among Kennedy's political opponents, or surely the majority of them, or among people who make a virtue of their political cynicism, Americans moved toward each other, groping for the connection which would dispel loneliness—I have been told that in foreign places compatriots, particularly students abroad, sought out each other as if drawn together against an unnameable enemy."

THE DEATH OF KENNEDY produced among Americans in their grief, for a moment, a sense of self-identity which has not existed since, because he had succeeded in reconciling contradictory impulses in the American character which all too often make for self-destruction; "the interplay between idealism and realism in the American character is a complicated phenomenon, and the balance Kennedy held between them was impressive." But with his death that balance was destroyed, and who indeed can say how long Kennedy himself could have maintained it? One consequence was the renewed and intensified alienation of the American intellectual establishment from the practical working of the American political process which Kennedy for a time had overcome. Rawness and idealism increasingly stood over against one another in angry confrontation, and, as often happens in such situations, each began to assume the uglier, and frequently the more absurd features of the other.

The greater part of Mrs Trilling's book is taken up with some characteristic scenes during that confrontation in the age of Johnson and Nixon, in which it seemed at times that America was intent on tearing itself apart; a pseudo-religious Psychedelic Celebration by Dr Timothy Leary of the *paradis artificiel* of LSD[2]; the student revolt at Columbia, which for a time reduced that great Ivy League university to a shambles from which it has still not wholly recovered; a confrontation between the Prisoner of Sex, Norman Mailer, with four female critics, of whom only one, Mrs Trilling herself, seemed concerned to raise the proceedings above the level of knockabout music-hall buffoonery; a visit to Mrs Trilling's own old college of Radcliffe, once an independent women's college, but today enjoying, or suffering, the benefits of integration with Harvard, including co-habitation of their male and female students; the image of America presented by a film like *Easy Rider*, as a continent almost deserted except by its two youthful heroes, drug addicts and drug pushers, whose exploits provide the only events which animate its vast and empty spaces.

Mrs Trilling observes these scenes from the counter-culture which flourished under Johnson and Nixon with what is a refreshing combination of a warm heart and a cool sardonic eye. The eye is acutely aware of the powerful element of farce which is never absent from these scenes, but the heart cannot help registering a kind of sadness that so many hopes, aspirations, confused strivings towards an America which shall be something better than the America of Viet Nam and Watergate should be so unworthily and inadequately represented. Her account, for instance, of Dr Leary's Psychedelic Celebrants is both comic and pathetic; she is only slightly taken aback that Germaine Greer should publicly welcome the opportunity of confrontation with Norman Mailer because of her proclaimed intention of going to bed with him; but she cannot help grieving that the splendid amenities of Radcliffe, as compared with its austerities in her own day, should be reduced to a kind of refuse dump by ice-cream cartons, Coca-Cola bottles, plastic containers, cigarette butts scattered indiscriminately and at random by its emancipated students, male and female, and is saddened to find, in conversation with them, that, despite free access to each others' beds, they suffer from an overwhelming sense of loneliness.

If Mrs Trilling did not keep a strict rein on her gift for mockery and satire she would come very near to persuading us that such scenes from the counter-culture are not really to be taken seriously; they are scenes in which the actors, in turning in on themselves, have lost touch with the rawness of American life which is the counterpart, and the origin, of their idealism. But her gift of sympathy and understanding also persuades us that in such manifestations of American life we are meeting with a genuine mutation in the American character, in both its male and female variants. At the end of her book we are tempted to ask whether this was simply one of the blind alleys which the evolutionary process sometimes takes, or whether it represents a permanent change which even the peanut Baptist from Georgia will find it impossible to reverse.

[2] See "Celebrating with Dr Leary", ENCOUNTER, June 1967.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IT IS NATURAL that since Mrs Trilling's critical eye is directed at so many of the *idées reçues* of American cultural life, her book should have had a not wholly favourable reception in her own country and has indeed been exposed to some fairly savage counter-criticism. Unfortunately, they have centred on one aspect of Mrs Trilling's book, which tends to obscure rather than illuminate the issues which really divide Mrs Trilling from her critics; that is to say, her criticism of Miss Lillian Hellman's book, *Scoundrel Time*,[3] which professed to give an account of the persecution suffered by American intellectuals during the McCarthy era, and in particular by Miss Hellman and her friend and lover, Dashiell Hammett. Not unnaturally, Miss Hellman and Hammett come very well out of this account. On the other hand, Lionel Trilling, Mrs Trilling's husband, was condemned for his statement that Whittaker Chambers was "a man of honour", that is to say, one who could not have deliberately given false witness against Alger Hiss. Mrs Trilling not unnaturally took up the defence of her dead husband, and in doing so took the opportunity to expose what she took to be the shortcomings of *Scoundrel Time* as an historically objective account of the McCarthy era and of criticising Miss Hellman's political attitude towards Communism, just as Miss Hellman had criticised her and her husband's. Her publisher then refused to publish *We Must March My Darlings* unless Mrs Trilling withdrew her comments on Miss Hellman, partly, one supposes, because Miss Hellman was one of their best-selling authors, partly, perhaps, because of the unpopularity of Mrs Trilling's belief that to suffer persecution is not in itself a proof of innocence. Mrs Trilling not unnaturally rejected this attempt at censorship by publisher, so that her book has appeared under a different imprint from Miss Hellman's.

The background to this complicated piece of literary in-fighting covers an entire era of American political and intellectual history, extending from the '30s to the present day. At the heart of it lies the question of the ambiguous and ambivalent attitude adopted by American radical thought towards the problem of Communism, and, equally, to the problems created by post-war political developments in America. Mrs Trilling's answer to this question has at least the merits of being clear, which is rather more than one can say of the answers provided by many of her critics, in particular Miss Hellman; it is that whatever the shortcomings of democracy in America, McCarthy, Viet Nam, Watergate and all, they are as nothing compared with the crimes which have been and continue to be committed in the name of Communism, and that any attempt to conceal, blur or confuse this distinction is inevitably to be led into intellectual subterfuge and deceit.

So plain and positive a stance is not one which wins much favour in fashionable intellectual circles in America today. It could be described as a liberal stance, in the sense of that word as used by Mrs Trilling's husband in the title of his book, *The Liberal Imagination*. But to be a liberal in the United States today is, in the eyes of many American intellectuals, hardly distinguishable from being a conservative, even a reactionary; one might as well be Ronald Reagan. And in any case, such distinctions, in the eyes of the younger generation, as described by Mrs Trilling in her accounts of Radcliffe or Dr Leary's celebrants, are of no importance and indeed scarcely intelligible, because, as she says, history has passed them by and they know or understand little or nothing of their country's recent past except that, whatever its policies or practices, they were necessarily in the wrong. The debate about the McCarthy era is one which still reflects profound divisions in the intellectual life of America; one should be grateful to Mrs Trilling for her collection of articles which provide so sharp a commentary on how, in different forms, these divisions still continue today. We must continue to march, my darlings; but whither and where our pioneers no longer know.

R

[3] See, in ENCOUNTER (February 1977), Sidney Hook's article on "The Case of Lillian Hellman."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Webbs as Pilgrims

Eastern Approaches (in unpublished MSS)—By GEORGE FEAVER

BEATRICE WEBB regarded her celebrated *My Apprenticeship* (1926) as merely the first instalment of a fuller autobiography in which she would elaborate her conception of "the place of religion in the life of man." But when she died in 1943 the work was left uncompleted. The finished portion, bringing her story down to the eve of the Webbs' departure on their second world tour in 1911, was edited by Margaret Cole and Barbara Drake and published in 1948 as *Our Partnership*.

What is not generally known is that late in life Beatrice had embarked on a quite separate scheme of autobiographical composition—"a literary adventure" (she wrote in her diary for 1938), "... a sort of intellectual autobiography." She entitled her new project *The Three Stages of Our Pilgrimage*, and her plan was to record

> "[a] Pilgrim's Progress ... not of one individual, but of two in one: a sort of Siamese twin ... joined together, not in the middle of one body, but in the middle of two lives."

The notion of life as a kind of religious journey—dramatically incorporated in the very title of Beatrice's latest scheme of autobiography—points to a significant but hitherto unexplored theme in Webbian Socialism. Biographically, it may be said of the Webbs that their joint career on the Left was an archetypal ideological pilgrimage, in quest of the "new" political order they were convinced must rise upon the moral and spiritual wreckage of 19th-century liberal civilisation. And in this quest, there was an intimate interplay between their actual travels in life and their metaphorical journey towards a faith by which to live.

IN FACT, A STRIKING FEATURE of the Webbs' autobiographical manuscripts[1] is the prominence accorded to the travel diaries kept by the partners on their world tours of 1898 and 1911–12. Beatrice apparently thought of them as narrative bridges with which to link the "stages" of their intellectual journey from Fabianism to Russian Communism. But, in the outcome, her failure to complete either *Our Partnership* or *The Three Stages of Our Pilgrimage* meant that the travel accounts were never to be published as she had planned.

"Round the Anglo-Saxon World", a lengthy essay discussing the Webbs' impressions of America and Australasia in 1898 and intended by Beatrice to form the fourth chapter of *Our Partnership*, was omitted by the editors because in their opinion it had "little or no bearing on the main concerns of the present volume." Mrs Cole also entirely excluded the extensive 1911–12 Asian journals when she edited a volume of further selections from Beatrice's diaries for the period 1912–24, on the ground that they were "almost entirely written by Sidney and are, as might be expected, monumentally dull"—even though Beatrice had contemplated publishing them as a separate volume, *The Far East*, of her uncompleted autobiography.

Mrs Cole's lack of interest in the Webbs' travels is a notable feature of her extensive writings on the partnership (so extensive, indeed, that the late Harold Laski once malevolently jibed in a letter to R. H. Tawney that "Mrs Cole has taken over [the Webbs'] legacy as a permanent source of income."). In her 1946 biography of Beatrice, she devotes a single paragraph to the 1898 trip (and incorrectly describes its itinerary). She devotes another paragraph to the year-long 1911–12 world tour.

> "It cannot be said [Mrs Cole explained] that their travels were of much importance to the outside world. ... They were too British to assimilate easily non-British habits of thought. ... Their judgments about other countries have a certain superficiality."

She cast a question mark over her own claims as a reliable judge in such matters by adding, approvingly:

[1] A large collection of Webbiana, including Beatrice's voluminous diary, is contained in the Passfield Papers, London School of Economics. Quotations throughout this essay not otherwise identified derive from this source.

Prefacing *Our Partnership*, the editors note only that Beatrice had projected a continuation of her autobiography, under the general title "My Creed and My Craft." No mention is made of the *Pilgrimage* scheme. But it is clear both from Beatrice's diaries and from a number of boxes of miscellaneous draft matter that she expended a great deal of effort on it—which makes her editors' failure to so much as acknowledge its existence rather puzzling.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> "Only in the case of the USSR, where they had already an eager appreciation and desire to understand, did they bring back anything that was of great value to the British to learn."

In the case of the 1898 travel journals, at least, Mrs Cole's strictures did not for long prevent their appearance elsewhere. In 1959 the New Zealand portion was published. On the strength of the book's imaginative cover, its publishers were less concerned than Margaret Cole that the diaries would be seen to be "monumentally dull." The Webbs are depicted arm-in-arm, in an implausibly romantic cartoon, as natty Edwardians. Sidney is holding a brown bowler atop his head with one hand, his rolled umbrella, a batch of beribboned manuscripts, and Beatrice's hand clutched rigidly under his other arm—while the intrepid Fabian world-travellers are whisked magically across a star-filled Southern sky![2]

In draft prefaces for the proposed published versions of these travel diaries Beatrice set out her view that they were valuable precisely because they were "a prolonged change of scene, a sort of sabbatical year" from the Webbs' usual sociological studies. Their touristic observations of foreign institutions might well yield "suggestions and hypotheses for the investigation of those amid which we live." There was another and more important utility in their reflections on other races:

> "... They make the investigator aware of the limits to be set to his generalisations. For centuries prior to Captain Cook, the European naturalists had described the swan as invariably having, among other attributes, that of whiteness. When travellers at last got to Australia, they saw, for the first time, a swan that was black."

Beatrice's allusion to natural science reflects the Social Darwinian underpinnings of the Webbs' thought. They had chosen the itinerary of their 1898 tour, she explained, because

> "in spite of differences in magnitude of territory, in climate, in natural resources, and in an admixture of races, the political and economic structure and social habits of the USA, New Zealand and Australia were varieties of the British species, expressed in the same language and embedded in the same cultural traditions."

All shared in that species *trilogia*—the Christian religion, capitalist profit-making, and political democracy—which was synonymous, she submitted, with what is called Western civilisation.

WHEN THE WEBBS EMBARKED on their world travels, the intellectual influences which had chiefly shaped their view of the world beyond British shores were a combination of Positivism, Fabianised Darwinism, and Liberal Imperialism.[3] They believed that the eventual (and inevitable) achievement of a socialist international order would be best promoted by accepting the current world-wide hegemony of a reformist "Anglo-Saxon" Empire, as preferable to the inevitable practical alternative, a throwback imperial dictatorship. This accounts for the rather smug and even condescending tone of the "Anglo-Saxon" diary materials, which remind one of G. K. Chesterton's old crack about how "travel narrows the mind."[4] Thus, the United States was judged to have fallen short of the Anglo-Saxon parent stock from which it had sprung in its lack of industrial democracy, in the inefficiency of its municipal institutions, and in the corruption of its party politics. Australians displayed a vulgar materialism and suffered from an "un-coordinated individualism", while the leading politicians of New Zealand were dismissed as unscientifically collectivist.

And yet the Webbs did attempt to balance off these criticisms in their 1898 accounts of the Anglo-Saxon progeny of the world. In the initiative and efficiency of her profit-making enterprise, and in "public welfare by private persons", the well-mannered America was unsurpassed by any nation. The Australian, like the Briton, was to be found " 'Muddling on', with a high standard of honour", higher indeed in public life than in the sphere of ordinary business; while of New Zealand, with its class moderation and social egalitarianism, Beatrice declared that "if I had to bring up a family outside Great Britain I would choose New Zealand as its home." Underlying the Webbs' basically hopeful view of these countries in 1898 was their belief that, as members of the species "Anglo-Saxon", all displayed the redeeming quality of political democracy. Extended to embrace socialism—in emulation of the example set by the Fabians of the Mother Country—it was the feature of their heritage which rendered them, in the Webbs' eyes, demonstrably the family of nations morally fittest to survive.

All that had changed by 1911. In her last diary

[2] In 1963 the American section of the diary was published, followed in 1965 by its Australian counterpart. Uncannily, it seemed that even from beyond the grave the imperious Beatrice would have her way over the publication of the 1898 travel diaries. This was not to be the fate, though, of the 1911–12 diaries. These Asian journals, which are arguably more significant than the earlier ones, remain entirely unpublished.

[3] For the background: see G. B. Shaw, *Fabianism and the Empire* (1900); Bernard Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform* (1960); G. R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency* (1975); and Williard Wolfe, *From Radicalism to Socialism* (1975). The best biographical work is Norman and Jeanne MacKenzie's recent *The Fabians* (Simon & Schuster, published in Britain by Weidenfeld & Nicolson as *The First Fabians*, 1977).

[4] G. K. Chesterton, *What I Saw in America* (1922).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

entry prior to embarkation on their Asian tour, Beatrice wrote that she had reached "a tag end of a period of my life." Looking back some 27 years later, she was to recollect that by the date of their return to England in 1912 she and her husband had come to believe that the principles underlying the *Minority Report on the Poor Law* and the Anti-Destitution Campaign based upon it—it had engaged their propagandistic energies in the half-dozen years before their Eastern tour and formed the high-water mark of the Fabian stage of their pilgrimage—were "out-of-date." When the Webbs left England in the early summer of 1911 they still clung to their "Anglo-Saxon" imperialism. By the date of their return they had profound misgivings. Domestically, their own proposals for eradicating poverty had, by then, been dished by Lloyd George's pioneering social insurance schemes. Abroad, they had discovered arresting alternatives to the tripartite "Anglo-Saxon" values of Christianity, profit-making capitalism, and political democracy.

BEATRICE POTTER WEBB

IN THEIR LIBERAL imperialist phase, the Webbs had envisaged the British Empire as a world-wide workshop in which the able-bodied unemployed, who idle away their hours at the labour exchanges of Britain's major cities—a particular concern of the puritanical and efficiency-conscious partners—might be more productively deployed.

The theme is amply evidenced in the diary the Webbs kept in Canada, on the first leg of the 1911–12 tour. With an expanding economy crying out for additions to its work force, the vast and empty Northern Dominion seemed to Beatrice the perfect laboratory for a sociological experiment that would "fit the Anglo-Saxon Unemployable to the Canadian life, and the Canadian life to the Anglo-Saxon Unemployed." She urged that "If our Empire is to mean anything, it ought at least to mean the salvation of our own race." What disconcerted her was that, influenced by the US example, so much of the large Canadian immigration in the early years of the new century seemed to be drawn from "the lower races of Europe", rather than from Britain.

Beatrice's argument points to the importance of race-thinking in the Webbs' pre-World War I writings—important because it constitutes a crucial link between their optimistic Fabian "stage" and that further middle "stage" of their intellectual pilgrimage in which prominence is accorded to the imagery of Western degradation, corruption, and decline (as in their *Decay of Capitalist Civilisation*). While still clinging to Liberal Imperialism at the outset of the 1911–12 tour, the Webbs' "socialised Darwinian" hopes for Britain's evolutionary role as a morally superior society had already begun to be gradually eroded by the decline of Britain's world status noticeable to careful observers in the century's opening decade. In one variation on this theme, the Webbs grew concerned that, domestically, the British class system was ossifying into a "money system" rather than a "natural selection system" for marital matching with an attendant weakening of the vital racial stock. In another, they were disturbed by decline of middle-class birth-rates and the concomitant growth of the eugenically inferior poor.[5]

[5] See, for example, Sidney Webb, *The Decline of the Birth Rate* (1907); the Webbs' *The Prevention of Destitution* (1911); *The Decay of Capitalist Civilisation* (1923); "The Guardianship of the Non-Adult Races", *New Statesman*, 2 August 1913. For sharply critical accounts of the place of racialism in Webbian thought, see J. M. Winter, "The Webbs and the Non-White World", *Journal of Contemporary History*, January 1974, and George Watson, "Race and the Socialists", ENCOUNTER, November 1976. More recent issues of ENCOUNTER have seen lively exchanges of letters on the subject of the Webbs and anti-Semitism.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

These increasingly critical perspectives on the future prospects of the "Anglo-Saxon" way led the intellectual pilgrims to a new interest in other races on the larger imperial and global stage.

AFTER THEIR DEPARTURE from Canada's West Coast in August 1911, the Webbs' ambitious 1911–12 itinerary called for them to visit Japan and Korea, Manchuria and China, then to cross the Bay of Bengal to India, before returning home in late Spring 1912 via Suez, with a stopover at Cairo. Nowhere in these extensive travels were they more profoundly impressed than in Japan. From the moment of their debarkation at Yokahama, the Western sociologists found Japan's teeming human landscape a subject of absorbing visual interest, with its

> "extraordinary variety of types . . . from the highly intellectual large-headed man to a creature that looks like a cross between a negro and an ape of good-natured disposition. You seldom see an evil angry face—merely a stupid one."

"Who would have foreseen", Beatrice mused retrospectively in her draft of *The Far East*, that the "little yellow men and women" depicted by Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado*, "with their fantastic rites and ceremonies and flippant and even naughty ways", would by the first decade of the century have militarily humbled Imperial China and Tsarist Russia alike.

In certain respects the Webbs found Japan strikingly reminiscent of England. Both nations were peopled by energetic island races of remarkably pure racial stock, though it seemed to the Webbs that the Japanese were more intent than their Anglo-Saxon counterpart on maintaining the distinction. The "governing class" of Japan struck them as

> "exactly like that at Downing Street, except [Beatrice wrote home] I should think they worked rather longer hours and they don't take holidays—also they are more matter-of-fact and inclined to work entirely through the Experts."

At a dinner party they met the Japanese Foreign Secretary, "to whom", Beatrice enthused in a letter to Clifford Sharp, "I quite lost my heart—he was a Japanese Arthur Balfour and he was equally at home in Metaphysics and Art and Political Science—talked perfect English."

Even the physical setting reminded the travellers of home. The Prime Minister's residence in Tokyo was situated "in a locality corresponding to Holland Park in London." The estate of a rich landlord at Niigata they found "very like the drive in an English park." Osaka was "the Manchester of Japan", though its long main street of lighted shops struck them as "a curious combination of Regent Street and Cheapside and Wood Street and the Middle Row of Covent Garden, with a dash of the New Cut, but always coming back to the recollection of Burlington Arcade with the roof off." In short, as Beatrice explained to her sister Kate Courtney, there were many similarities in the setting and in the people of Britain and Japan. Both races, she suggested, were "by nature 'exploiters of other people', but with different standards of what is permissible—hence their mutual dislike." The Webbs, at least, felt that there was more to be gained by mutual admiration—for these hitherto rather complacent Liberal Imperialists were to discover in Japan's admirable blending of traditional and modern institutions an impressive oriental challenge to the purported supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon way of life.

IN JAPAN, THE ENDURING SOCIALIST VISION of an idyllic face-to-face society of *Gemeinschaft* solidarity danced before the Webbs' political imaginations. "Of Japan today", Sidney wrote in an article, "there are two aspects, the old and the new, agriculture and manufactures, the country and the town." And while the Webbs spent a good part of their eight-week visit in and around the big cities, visiting schools and slums, oil fields and silk factories, the highlight of their stay proved to be their exposure to rural Japan, accompanied on their bucolic meanderings by one Nishi, a faithful and enterprising guide to whom the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims became warmly attached. What they discovered in the Japanese countryside, Sidney wrote enthusiastically, was "the perfection of *la petite culture* and *la petite industrie*":

> " . . . Imagine an intelligent and essentially *civilised* population of millions of families, settled in closely contiguous villages, on fertile plains, between picturesque mountain ranges from which descends abundant irrigation water. . . . In no country of Europe or America that we have seen is there so large a proportion of the population in the position of being their own masters, owning themselves the instruments of production, working for their own profit, occupying their own little houses, worshipping at their own family shrines, and consuming very largely the products of their own labour. Here . . . is the proprietary state, with the family group as the economic unit, which Mr Hilaire Belloc finds so attractive. And certainly, nowhere is this society more alluring than in rural Japan."[6]

With no division between work and leisure, and lacking an intellectual proletariat, the social organisation of traditional Japan differed fundamentally from that of modern Europe. Democratic institutions were unknown and seemingly unwanted. Yet in rural Japan (as Beatrice wrote approvingly) there was in practice "an immense

[6] "The Social Crisis in Japan", *The Crusade*, January 1912.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

amount of Social Democracy as distinguished from Political Democracy." The system worked, she pointedly observed, because there was an expert bureaucracy, uniformly administered in all parts of the nation, with a standard of dedication to public service so high that supervision or control from below was unnecessary.

Japan in 1911 was, the Webbs realised, a nation in dramatic transition, undertaking to accomplish in a matter of decades a degree of social evolution greater than that of the preceding three centuries, and thus analogous to Britain in the years following the Industrial Revolution. The traditional focus of life in the village community was increasingly offset by the development of a native Japanese capitalism, and by the attendant growth in the larger industrial cities of a wage-earning proletariat. As the scientific triumph of industrial growth proceeded, the challenge would be to preserve an underlying sense of spiritual purpose in a world increasingly dominated by the ascendancy of science and technology. The pitfalls were many, the outcome problematic — but the Webbs were confident on the basis of what they had seen in Japan that its "alert and open-minded" bureaucracy would realise in time "the precipice down which capitalist exploitation . . . is hurrying the nation."

SIDNEY WEBB

What buttressed their optimism was the Webbs' admiration of the Japanese capacity to link the spirit of administrative efficiency to the communal religious impulse. "The innovative collectivism . . . the idealism, the self-abnegation of all classes of the community in a common cause", Beatrice felt, was the strength of the Japanese. "What makes Japan great", she observed in a letter to Lady Betty Balfour, "is her practical mysticism—the spiritual significance which she attaches to so many of the relations of life—to that of parent and child, teacher and student, the officer and the private soldier, the Emperor and his people." It was this impressive religiosity which confirmed the Webbs in their belief that Japan was in 1911 "still the land of the Rising Sun."

To be sure, the social face of Japan was not without blemishes. While in Japan the Webbs made a literal pilgrimage. At the great mountain monastery at Koyasan, wandering among the sixteen temples so magnificently sited 4,000 feet above the sea, the Fabian pilgrims wondered anew whether in view of the relentless pressures of modernisation Buddhism had any future in Japan, and whether the deep-seated Japanese tradition of pilgrimaging would be so transformed that a "cheap holiday element" would come to kill the original religious element. Rising at dawn to attend "matins", they were dismayed that the *sutras* were intoned in "an ugly nasal chant", the priests seeming to perform no more than "an *exercise* mechanically repeated day by day." Their impression was that the majority of priests were "not in any way above the average in practical energy and active intelligence." Told that the educated Japanese felt they could do without religion, Beatrice responded by noting that "hooliganism" was on the increase in Japan's cities, and there were signs of a breaking down of the old spirit of unquestioning loyalty to the Emperor. "If", Beatrice asked,

> "all the old reverence and sense of domestic and social obligation which have been associated for centuries with Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples falls away, and if all supernaturalism becomes an absurdity, will any new philosophy other than agnosticism or materialism rise to give noble purpose to the life of the individual or the race?"

The Webbs left Japan with the question un-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

resolved. But they were satisfied for now that the essential religiosity of the common man in Japan had been redirected to civic purposes by the nation's paternalistic bureaucracy—which had taken up the slack left by the erosion of the Buddhist priesthood's traditional spiritual role.

THE WEBBS' PRO-JAPANESE SENTIMENTS were only reinforced by their further travels. In Korea and China, especially, they found the inhabitants depressingly corrupt and even degenerate (Beatrice was especially disgusted by what appeared to be the rampancy in China of the "unnatural vice" of homosexuality). The Koreans Beatrice judged harshly as "a horrid race—idle, dirty, and quarrelsome, with sullen and suspicious look. . . . The whole race seems to have gone into decay—by centuries of misgovernment and oppressive taxation." The Chinese, she wrote home, were "very difficult to like or respect . . . the strange combination of cowardice & cruelty & corruption in the ruling class, & the lack of loyalty or faith in the people at large, is very distasteful." In an article the Webbs characterised the Chinese as "a striking example of arrested development", concluding that "this so-called 'great' race . . . is today, by all the available evidence, capable of nothing!"[7]

FAR MORE SIGNIFICANT were the partners' impressions of British India, where they spent the longest time of any of the Asian countries they visited, arriving on the eve of the great New Year's Durbar in honour of George V, and finally departing from Bombay on 16 April 1912. "We are immensely glad we came to India", Beatrice assured a London correspondent, "especially now that we can compare it with Japan and China." The Webbs were not only confirmed in their admiration of the Japanese, but converted to the view that the claims to racial superiority of the Anglo-Saxon administrators of British India did not stand an especially favourable comparison with the subjugated race of Hindus it was their task to govern. They arrived at this disturbing conclusion after traversing the length and breadth of the sub-continent, their days filled with the most diverse experiences—from the usual touristic "flying visits" to such places as the Khyber Pass and the Taj Mahal, to sojourns in the homes of cultivated Hindus and Muslims, from visits to Indian village communities and (by elephant) to stay in camp with British Collectors, to interviews with Maharajahs and high-ranking Anglo-Indian civil servants, and the usual Webbian inspection of "institutions."

[7] "China in Revolution", *The Crusade*, March 1912.

"The more we saw of India, the more we learned about the Government and the officials, and the longer we lived among the people", Sidney wrote on a sombre note (in a diary entry composed "on the 'Homeward' Sea", 16 to 25 April 1912)—

> "*the graver became our tone*, and the more subdued our optimism. At first, after China, India seemed hopeful. . . . But as our acquaintance with the Indian bureaucracy has increased, and as we have more and more appreciated its alliance in the main with reactionary Imperialism and commercial selfishness in England, we are less confident. Three months acquaintance has greatly increased our estimate of the Indians, and greatly lessened our admiration for, and our trust in, this Government of officials."

What frustrated the Webbs about the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy was that its objectives seemed to them so limited. Its conception of government was simply to put down internal war and violent crime, to decide civil suits and maintain order, "and for the rest to leave people alone." The British should *do something*, Beatrice scolded, to bring a fuller sense of shared purpose to this hopelessly uncoordinated land. Impatient as ever for results, she returned again and again in the Indian diary to the idea that an Indian version of the Boy Scouts would be a good beginning.

Irritated at the "complete and almost fatuous ignorance" of most British officials, at their "essential inferiority in culture, charm, and depth of intellectual and spiritual existence", the Webbs were unexpectedly impressed by the high culture of the Indian "aristocracy of intellect" at its best. In the circumstances, the partners feared, friction between the "actual alien governor" and the "potential native governor" was bound to increase. Instead of driving the Indian intellectuals into an underground nationalist movement, the British should take these indigenous opinion leaders into civic partnership, so that (as Beatrice asserted) "the British race might pride themselves on having been the finest race of school masters, as well as the most perfect builders of Empire."

In this same diary entry Beatrice was led to a comparison of the races with which they had come in contact on their current tour. All shared such common institutions as the joint family and the small-scale cultivator, all displayed a "certain community of religious experiences." But beyond that, there remained a "deep-down unlikeness" in the three major Asian races. And Beatrice went on, in a lengthy digression, to offer the following generalisations about their respective racial traits:

> ". . . The Japanese are a race of Idealists, but these Ideals are fixed and amazingly homogeneous and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> are always capable of being translated into immediate and persistent action. They are, in fact, perhaps the most Executive race in the world—the most capable of discovering the means to an end—and the most self-contained and self-disciplined in working out these means, and therefore in attaining their ends. . . . About the Chinese I do not feel competent to speak as I dislike them so heartily. . . . What revolts us in the Chinese is, on the one hand, the absence of the idealism of the Japanese and Indian races, and on the other, their present lack of capacity for the scientific method, and for disciplined effort, of the Japanese. . . . Like the Japanese, the Hindu is an Idealist—but alas! for his political efficiency—his ideals are 'all over the place' and frequently he lacks the capacity to put them into practice—he can neither discover the means nor work at them with unswerving persistency. Then the aristocracy of India is dragged down by a multitude of lower castes and lower races—embedded in a population which seems strangely childish in intellect and undisciplined in conduct."

The closing sentence of this extract suggests a problem that Beatrice tells us was "before my mind—as an almost morbid obsession" in India: the problem of the religious life of Hinduism. Visiting the temples of Benares and Allahabad, and especially at the Khajuraho Temples, Beatrice had been revolted by "the incontinence of the popular religion—the strange combination of almost hysterical and certainly promiscuous idolatry . . . and behind it all, the sinister background of revolting lasciviousness and gross exudity."

But this, she went on to explain, was "only one side of the shield." In the austere and pious domesticity of *purdah*, with its "almost fanatical idealisation of wifely devotion", Beatrice detected elements of an alternative tradition of self-abnegation in Hinduism, even urging the re-introduction of *suttee* (though, egalitarian that she was, she felt the practice should apply to widower and widow alike).

Another and more inspiring vision was that of the so-called New Hinduism. In organisations such as the *Arya Samaj* the religious impulse was "combined with a sincere and powerful self-discipline, a self-discipline with the express object of maintaining the mind and body in the fittest condition for the most perfect service of the community." One must balance the superstition and incontinence of the populace with "the healthy, virile and free service of religious orders self-dedicated to the progress of the race." She submitted that Westerners could learn much from this Eastern conception of social service rendered by an aristocracy of birth and intellect, with its restricted democracy of "a community of social equals."

India, then, presented a situation which struck the British pilgrims as the very antithesis of what they had encountered in Japan, where the pious religiosity of the common man was the strength of the Japanese national character, the decadence of the Buddhist priests its shame. What was needed was somehow to combine the best features of the Japanese and Indian racial traits to yield a reverential social order in which a unifying political religion was practised by leader and follower alike.

This was just what they were eventually to find so appealing about Soviet Russia. There, they were to discover, the "priests" of Marxism-Leninism practised a tradition of service as impressive as that of the *Arya Samaj*, an energetic coordination of national purpose every bit as efficient as that of the Japanese bureaucracy. And there the masses, so unlike the Hindu populace of India, shared fully in the political faith of their leaders—whose own convictions (the fervently partisan Webbs were naively prepared to believe in the 1930s) were of such deep-seated religiosity as to stand fair comparison with those of the pious peasantry of rural Japan.

The Webbs' discovery of a cultural alternative to the Anglo-Saxon way on their 1911–12 Asian tour led them on to the pessimistic middle "stage" of their life's journey, in which initial scepticism was compounded by Beatrice's depression in the years of the Great War and its aftermath. It was to prove itself a transitional period of Webbian social democratism, characterised by *The Decay of Capitalist Civilisation* (1923), a book whose gloomy mood stood in sharp contrast with the partners' well-known Fabian doctrines. Their pilgrims' route of passage thus brought them to The Slough of Despond. But earlier, in Asia, seed had been sown that would bear fruit in their eventual passage beyond, to a third and final "stage" of their intellectual pilgrimage, in the USSR. It is significant that *The Decay* was translated into Japanese in 1924, less than a year after publication in London of the original English-language edition. And it was more than coincidental that, a decade later, praising the Communist Party of the USSR for its "vocation of leadership" in their *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation?* (1935), the Webbs would borrow the imagery of the "Order of the Samurai" from H. G. Wells's 1905 book, *A Modern Utopia.*

When Beatrice eventually embarked on ambitious schemes of autobiography in the 1920s, she encountered difficulties with her continuing story line that she could not resolve in the confines of her original plans.

The key to the success of *My Apprenticeship*, then just published, had been the brilliant climax

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of a development-of-character theme reminiscent in its dramatic effect of George Eliot's novels—the triumphant emergence, out of the restricting social milieu of a privileged yet purposeless young woman, of a social worker selflessly dedicating her life to the service of her fellows in a setting of East London slums.[8] As Beatrice was herself to express it in the Introduction to the *Apprenticeship*, her first instalment of autobiographical writing had organised itself around the heroic tension in a young woman's life between "an Ego that affirms and an Ego that denies." She went on to explain that the clash between these polarities resolved itself, in her case, into two questions intimately connected:

> "... Can there be a science of social organisation in the sense in which we have a science of mechanics or a science of chemistry?... is man's capacity for scientific discovery the only faculty required for the reorganisation of society according to an ideal? Or do we need religion as well as science, emotional faith as well as intellectual curiosity?"

The passage articulates the lifelong search for philosophical certainty of an intellectual pilgrim. *My Apprenticeship* assuaged concern about the interim outcome of Beatrice's journey by tracing its development from initial doubt to a conclusion in which she had safely arrived at the rationalist citadel of social science. Her planned successor volumes faltered, because in the years in which their composition commenced the Webbs had not yet passed out of the pessimistic middle "stage" of their long spiritual quest.

I BELIEVE that it was Beatrice's dawning realisation that this situation yielded an unsatisfactory ending for her literary voyage of self-discovery that lay at the heart of her incapacity as a writer to see her original plan of autobiography through to completion. Sensing an atmosphere of "tragic bewilderment" in the Western world of the 1920s, she observed that "no one now talks of progress." It was hardly the stuff out of which to weave a comforting conclusion for an autobiographical pilgrim's progress.

At the time, Beatrice had no clear idea of where the socialistic adventure on which she had embarked with Sidney three decades before might end. Her urge to write an autobiography, indeed, owed much to a vague notion that, in the act of composing it, she might attain a surer grasp of how the partners' pursuit of the social investigator's craft fitted into the larger design of that mysterious, and still unresolved, quest. It was not until four years after the publication of her first instalment that Beatrice began slowly to see a way out of her yearning to know the answers to life's big questions, and coincidentally, a resolution of her autobiographer's dilemma.

In February 1930 the Webbs made the acquaintance of the Russian Ambassador to Great Britain, Gregori Sokolnikov and his wife; and, from that point on, the imagery and the reality of the travel theme—of life's journey as a triumphantly concluded pilgrimage—became ever more intimately entwined. The Russians' idealism and asceticism made a profound impression on Beatrice. They struck her as "veritable puritans." Their simplicity of manner was akin to that of "the very best type of young workman of good character in quest of knowledge." A political society composed of such admirable specimens, a civilisation based on such ideals, was deserving of a closer look.

Beatrice admitted the dangers in an uncritical approach to Stalin's Russia—the rigid orthodoxy of its "creed autocracy" would have to be somehow reconciled with the freedom of men's souls. But she was disposed to believe that the good outweighed the bad in that massive human laboratory, in which an epoch-making experiment in creating a secular "church without a dogma" was being carried steadily forward by a zealous new political priesthood. The vision that had presented itself on the Webbs' world travels and the avowed personal goal of *My Apprenticeship*—the achievement of a final resting-place in life's journey, where intellectual allegiance to the idea of scientifically ascertained social arrangements would join hands with the emotional assurance of a settled secular faith—came back to her in a rush.

> "It is the invention of the religious order, as the determining factor in the life of a great nation, that is the magnet that attracts me to Russia."

The autobiography was set aside for the pursuit of a more pressing task, one which was to provide the Webb partnership with a dramatically climactic ending. For with the partners' brief but revelatory visit to the Soviet Union in May 1932 they may be said finally to have achieved in biographical fact the goal of the pilgrim's progress that escaped Beatrice's pen as she struggled with her draft autobiography.

> "All I know" [she confided to her diary on the eve of departure for Russia] "is that I *wish* Russian Communism to succeed."

In the vague promise of the Russian dictatorship of Joseph Stalin she finally found her New Jerusalem of political and sociological faith which, until then, had eluded her throughout a restless lifelong pilgrimage.

Consequently, the intensity of the aged socialists' dedication to the preparation of their

[8] See F. R. Leavis, "Mill, Beatrice Webb, and the 'English School' ", *Scrutiny*, June 1949.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eulogistic and massive *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation?* quite replaced Beatrice's interest in her projected autobiography in the years 1932–35. It is a well-known story that her devotion to the Russian cause became so pronounced that, as if in response to the sceptical reserve of early reviewers, she defiantly dropped the question mark in the original title from the book's second edition! The Webbs' will-to-believe in Stalin's good intentions is embarrassingly evidenced throughout *Soviet Communism*, which amounts to little more than a 1930s Intourist guide to the Soviet Union. "Even I", John Strachey, then a Communist, was later to recall, "Even I was staggered by the book's utter lack of any critical analysis of Russian society."[9] Famine, mass deportations and killings were acknowledged but were dismissed (as were the infamous Moscow Show Trials) as a small price to pay for the creation of a "new civilisation."

> "The execution of the plan is sometimes hideously imperfect [Beatrice explained to H. G. Wells] but they are always overcoming their difficulties."

Momentarily stunned by the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact, she rebounded with a long introduction to the book's third edition, which "proved" that Stalin was no dictator—that Russia was in fact a "multiform democracy"—and that the 1936 Soviet Constitution was really a new Declaration of the Rights of Man.[10] Preparing this apologetic *tour de force* for reissue as a pamphlet entitled *The Truth About Soviet Russia*, Beatrice was pleased to note in her diary that the then Soviet Ambassador in London, Ivan M. Maisky, had offered to find paper, which was in War-time short supply, for her to print it!

WHEN BEATRICE RETURNED to her autobiographical schemes after the publication of *Soviet Communism*, she found herself in the unsatisfactory position of charting a plot the outcome of which was already known—and this is strikingly illustrated in the fact that she used as typing paper the reverse sides of discarded galley sheets for the already published Soviet book.

The Webbs' conversion of political faith had redirected the impulse which led Beatrice to her original terms of autobiographical reference. On the very last page of the 1938 postscript to the drastically shortened *Our Partnership* version of the autobiography, she simply paid tribute to *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation* as "the final and certainly the most ambitious task" of her intellectual pilgrimage with Sidney. The book had become a substitute for the multi-volumed autobiography. With its publication, their joint brainwork was done, their journey ended. "To use a theological term", Beatrice was herself to say of *Soviet Communism*, "this book is to be received as a work of supererogation." Its panegyrical pages celebrated her release at last from the burden of a hitherto uncertain pilgrim's progress, the arrival in practice at the final station on a true believer's way.

AT THE CONCLUSION of the Webbs' second world tour, Beatrice acknowledged that "A traveller, especially an elderly traveller, is liable to come back from his travels with his own general ideas confirmed."

Certainly she had found much in Asia to confirm her belief that the sphere of religion might somehow be combined with science to produce a higher nobility of purpose than had previously been attained by any society on the face of the earth—yielding a resolution at the social level of a tension which had for so long dominated the philosophical ruminations of her private world. Aboard ship, steaming for Suez, she had confessed to the diary that "I come back as mystified as ever." Yet unquestionably, the trip had served to bring her nearer to that ultimate resolution of her prolonged voyage of discovery. "This year's sojourn in strange worlds acted as a powerful ferment, altering and enlarging our conception of the human race, its past, its present and its future", she would later write in prefacing her draft of *The Far East*. "Speaking for myself", she added, "I was never again quite the same person after this exciting journey. Our [Asian] diaries are in fact predominantly autobiographical."

Early in the new century Beatrice observed of her partnership with Sidney: "We sail straight to our port over a sunlit sea. But the point we make for seems sometimes an unconscionable way off!"

The passage identifies its author as an adherent of one of the most persistent of contemporary images of politics. The ancient antecedents in religious thought of the idea of politics as a kind of religious travel or pilgrimage are clear. "Cain built the city", wrote Augustine (*City of God*, Bk. XV) "but Abel was a pilgrim and built none. For the city of the saints is above, though it

---

[9] *The Listener*, 13 October 1960.

[10] David Caute, *The Fellow-Travellers: A Postscript to the Enlightenment* (1973), ridicules Beatrice's defence of "democratic centralism" in the USSR: "we workers authorize you to tell us what to do and to override all our objections which in any case we shall refrain from expressing. The Dictatorship of the Pedagogues." The trouble with the Webbs, he adds, was that "Only facts, statistics and blueprints interested them, although their life's work was dedicated to the emancipation of the working class, which is commonly supposed to consist of people."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have citizens here upon earth." Now secularised (as social philosophers from Max Weber to Edward Shils and Robert Nisbet have suggested), the notion is intimately connected with the socio-philosophical phenomenon of estrangement or rootlessness, the search in the modern period for a political kingdom in which the new man in public life might come to terms with authority. An "Age of Ideology" has added the political pilgrimage to the established metaphors of politics (*e.g.*, as family management, as a game, as theatre, as warfare).

A vision of politics so intimately connected with the ideological frame of mind is understandably hostile to less ambitious points of view—which regard as, at best, tenuous the links between politics and the resolution of life's larger questions. "*Massed the waters, limitless*", writes the traditional poet.

> *How to know what is East of the Immortals' Ocean*
> *In all the world what place so far? . . .*
> *Heading to your country, you can only look to the sun*
> *Your returning sail can merely trust to the wind.*[11]

[11] "For Censor Ch'ao returning home to Japan", *Poems of Wang Wei* (trans. Robinson, 1973).

[12] John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to That which is to Come* (1678; ed. Sharrock, 1967).

Beatrice Webb's travel diaries bear witness that the peripatetic Fabians yearned for the comfort of something more certain.

THE WORD "PILGRIM" has two meanings. One of these signifies a wayfarer in alien lands—the other, more purposive, a traveller to a distant shrine or holy place as a devotee. And like the allegorical journey to spiritual salvation of John Bunyan's Christian, the Webbs' travels in life were a kind of Pilgrim's Progress, in which (though they could see this only in retrospect) from uncertain beginnings they struggled to escape the spiritual inadequacies of Capitalism and its besieged town of "Mansoul", on the way to their Celestial Soviet City. Years before they finally found their unifying autobiographical theme in Stalinist Russia, Beatrice had (while traversing Asia on their 1911–12 world tour) detected faint earthly outlines of the radically innovative future society of which she had long dreamed. "*But the Children began to be sorely weary, and they cryed out unto Him that loveth Pilgrims, to make their way more Comfortable.*"[12] Addressing a letter to Beatrice in Japan, Lady Betty Balfour was more prescient than she appreciated in employing the striking salutation, "*Dear Pilgrim.*"

The Charnel House, St Leonard's, Hythe

One of us, the prettiest,
would like a skull for an ash-tray.
We who have flesh round our skulls
and can imagine the pain of dying
are proper company
for these generations of the sexes.

One is soon to be dead herself,
another wishes that he were,
self-indulgent, waiting for a voice—
A calm night after a blistering day,
the evening quiet with disappointment
and the apertures of death.

A bad opera on the radio
proving that words and notes
make little difference,
and everywhere inside the summer room
the brilliant and disgusting skulls
with never a thought of names.

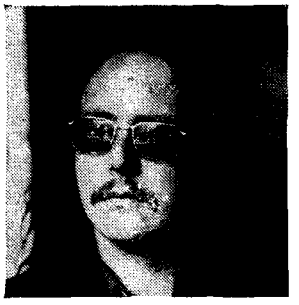
Peter Porter

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES & TOPICS

Peter Handke, and "Alienation-Fiction"

The Sorrows of Young Outsiders—By FERDINAND MOUNT



THE DARK GLASSES, deprecating moustaches, supercilious lips and black, matted hair make an unnerving, even sinister impression on the dust-jacket, not unlike Air Marshal Ky in a fright wig. The personality of Peter Handke, the young Austrian playwright, novelist, and poet, tends to unnerve and baffle critics. He makes them shift uneasily in their seats and murmur "disquieting" or "original." In America he is already a literary star. At least three of his novels have recently been published in English, five of his plays, and a couple of volumes of poetry.[1] The English-speaking world has been quick to copy the immediate German acclaim for his obvious talents in all these forms—most notably a plain and economical style made memorable by an acrid, melancholy sort of lyricism.

The details of Handke's instant success are relevant because they demonstrate so well exactly the kind of writing that is eagerly and unquestioningly received by the avant-garde audience in the West, although Handke's plays are often difficult, and sometimes nearly impossible to understand. He uses all the old-modern tricks. In one of his plays not a single word is spoken. In another, the characters are to be given the names of the actors who play them. These devices are intended to disorient the spectators, to deny them the familiar naturalistic illusions, the comforts of character and narrative. By now these distancing effects are as stale as any of the conventions of the well-made play and have built up their own expectations in the audience. The confections of their originators —Jarry, Brecht, Ionesco, Beckett—seem quite as stagey as Sir Henry Irving's performance in *The Bells*—and enjoyable in rather the same way. Technically Handke is about as original as William Douglas-Home. Where in Mr Douglas-Home's work you come across a slab of Rattigan, or a whiff of Wodehouse or a chunk of Coward, you soon pick up the resonances of Ubu or Godot in *They Are Dying Out* or *The Ride Across Lake Constance*. But just because Handke derives his *techniques* from so many of the standard modern sources, it may be easier to isolate the individuality and consistency of his *themes*.

Handke is preoccupied with domination, with the systematic ways in which one human being acquires and wields power over another and the ways that this shapes the behaviour, aspirations and prejudices of both owner and owned. In *My Foot, My Tutor*, the two characters are actually called *Ward* and *Warden* and they carry out an elaborate silent pantomime of copying and modifying one another's gestures and actions. In *They Are Dying Out*, Hans, the confidential clerk, describes to his employer, Quitt, how he gains a new sense of leisure by imitating his employer's gestures, yawning in the same way, putting his hands on his hips with his thumbs confidently forward.

> "I am compelled to be as free as you are. You have everything, live only for yourself, don't have to make any comparisons any more. Your life is poetic, Mr Quitt, and poetry as we know, produces a sense of power that oppresses no one—but rather dances the dance of freedom for us, the oppressed."

In *The Ride Across Lake Constance*, one actor points to another, saying:

> "He turns his back on us, sits in the most comfortable *fauteuil*—does that mean that he's more powerful than all of us?"

[1] Novels: *Short Letter, Long Farewell* and *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick* (Eyre Methuen, £3.95 and £3.50); *A Sorrow Beyond Dreams* (Souvenir Press, £2.95, paper £1.50). Plays: *Kaspar* (80p); *Offending the Audience* and *Self-Accusation* (£1.60, paper 80p); *The Ride Across Lake Constance* (80p); *They Are Dying Out* (£3.00, paper £1.25); and *My Foot, My Tutor* (in *Shakespeare the Sadist, and Other Plays*, £3.95, paper £1.50)—all published by Eyre Methuen. Poems: *The Innerworld of the Outerworld of the Innerworld* and *Nonsense and Happiness* (both published by Urizen, New York).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet it is the same actor who says:

> "I, on the other hand, am a born owner; only when I possess something do I become myself."

The play is an absurdist jumble. The characters behave in a purposefully random and inconsistent fashion in order to avoid being characters. They are merely fossilised pieces of behaviour, victims of the incessant crystallising process of social intercourse. Another actor in the play (it doesn't matter which):

> "An order resulted; and for people to continue to socialize with one another, this order was made explicit: it was formulated. And once it had been formulated, people had to stick to it because, after all, they had formulated it. It's natural, isn't it?"

Everything we say and do, however apparently noble, touching, loving or courageous, is in reality the end-product of social processes which are based on the domination of one human being by another. We must not be deceived by the glitter of quartz crystals into endowing them with divine properties or supreme value; they are merely geological formations. And it is essential above all that we should realise this, we should not wrap up unpleasant realities in false emotion. This is the first rule, and the second, which follows from it, is to accept only the evidence of your own feelings here and now. You must not let memory or external authority play tricks with you.

This philosophy is naturally likely to have a powerful effect upon your attitude to the world. You are to be suspicious of relationships with others and of the claims they make upon your emotions. You are to place a higher priority upon your own feelings than upon the available evidence of other people's, just as the fastidious when in foreign parts prefer their own personal supply of Malvern water to the local tap-water. You are, in short, to distrust if not actually dislike other people. The nearest permissible thing to affection is the absence of repulsion. Sexual relations, being based upon an undeniable biological imperative, are possible but only when entered into with a silent, preferably unknown partner.

THIS DISTRUSTFUL EGOISM is the attitude of the narrator of Handke's second semi-autobiographical novel, *Short Letter, Long Farewell.*

> "I quickly looked away from everyone who approached me on the sidewalk, soured by the sight of another face, disgusted as usual with everything that was not myself."

He says that "often in the past I had been overcome by confusion and disgust at the thought that someone was different from myself." As he journeys across the United States, shadowed by his estranged wife, watching and observing other people, he is occasionally stricken by regret. Sitting in a church he reflects that:

> "Religion had long been repellent to me, yet I longed to relate to something. It was unbearable to be alone and isolated. It must be possible for two human beings to belong to each other, to establish a relationship that is not personal, fortuitous and ephemeral, not based on a fraudulent and continually extorted love, but on a necessary, impersonal bond. Why had I never managed to be as unreflectingly loving to Judith as I was now while looking at this church dome or at the drops of wax on the stone floor? It was ghastly to have such feelings and not to be able to get out of myself! To stand there in dull-witted piety, wholly immersed in objects and movements."

Yet this turns out to be a moment of weakness. After his wife finally catches up with him, and attempts to shoot him, there is a sentimental finale in the house of John Ford, the real-life film director, in which the narrator and his wife develop the strength "to part in peace." They ride off into the sunset to go their separate ways—a kind of alienation Western.

THE REALITY FOR Handke is that relationships *are fraudulent and ephemeral. Human* beings do not and cannot belong to each other. Each man belongs only to himself, and is answerable only to his own consciousness. Even nature cannot get him "out of himself." The narrator tells us that:

> "I had grown up in the country and it was hard for me to imagine that nature could free anyone from anything. It had only oppressed me; at any rate, it had been distasteful to me. I detested stubble fields, fruit trees, and pastures, there was something repulsive about them. I saw them from too close at hand: in the stubble fields I ran barefoot; when I climbed trees, the bark scraped my skin; in the pastures I went about in rubber boots, chasing pissing cows in the rain. Only now did it dawn on me that I had been so keenly aware of these little annoyances because I had never been able to move about freely in nature: the fruit trees belonged to other people that I had to run away from, across the fields, and my only reward for tending the cows was rubber boots that I needed only for tending the cows."

The narrator here justifies his egoism by a political argument. His grievance against the social system permeates his view of nature; his melancholy and disgust are legitimised and ennobled by his perception of political injustice. This projection of an adult viewpoint back on to a recollection of childhood is not entirely convincing.

It is true that children on farms are not too young to be angered when they discover that the fields they work or play in belong to other people. Indeed, children may be angrier than adults because their resentment is less tempered by the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

experience of the world's otherness. Children, though, do not usually take it out on nature but rather, quite logically, tend to become distrustful of the landlord/bailiff and particularly of the latter's children, formerly playmates but now representatives of a resented system. The average child does not irrationally blame the cows and the fruit-trees for their owners. To do so would be a kind of devious idolatry.

This trick of overworking the sense of injustice, of politicising the whole visible universe for literary effect is again employed in *A Sorrow Beyond Dreams*, Handke's fictional memoir of his mother. Here the narrator builds up a grim picture of life in rural Carinthia and implies that the grimness is a consequence of all the decent land in the neighbourhood belonging to the church or to noble landowners. For practical purposes, life is just as hard as it had been before the formal abolition of serfdom in 1848. Life, particularly for women, is run on tramlines. The narrator's mother was high-spirited and would not tolerate this predictable, cramped existence.

> "It began with my mother suddenly wanting something. She wanted to learn, because in learning her lessons as a child she had felt something of herself. Just as when we say, 'I feel like myself.' For the first time, a desire, and she didn't keep it to herself."

She runs away from home, gets swept up in the hysteria of the *Anschluss*, takes up with a married man, gets pregnant, marries another man, and starts off on a chain of false starts and sad endings. She returns home in ignominy. Then again she begins to assert herself, becomes herself again, reads, talks politics, wishes she could have made something of herself. "She was gradually becoming an individual." Her attempts to get away in body or in mind demonstrate the suffocating tyranny of an apparently idyllic mountain village. Finally she kills herself. Her son writes this memoir to shake off the dull speechlessness with which he reacted to the news of her suicide. It is the system of property relations which grinds people down, robs them of themselves, deprives them of the capacity or even the wish to talk about themselves, to articulate their feelings and aspirations. Although this theft of personality bears more hardly on the oppressed, it also warps the oppressors and robs them of a truly free human personality. They too are hemmed in. Man is separated not only from nature and his fellow men but also from himself.

In this particular Austrian village:

> "No one had anything to say about himself; even in church, at Easter confession, when at least once a year there was an opportunity to reveal something of oneself, there was only a mumbling of catchwords out of the catechism, and the word 'I' seemed stranger to the speaker himself than a chunk out of the moon. If in talking about himself anyone went beyond relating some droll incident, he was said to be 'peculiar.' Personal life, if it had ever developed a character of its own, was depersonalized except for dream tatters swallowed up by the rites of religion, custom and good manners; little remained of the human individual, and indeed, the word 'individual' was known only in pejorative combinations.
>
> "The sorrowful Rosary; the glorious Rosary; the harvest festival; the plebiscite celebration; ladies' choice; the drinking of brotherhood; April Fools' pranks; wakes; kisses on New Year's Eve: in these rituals all private sorrow, ambition, hunger for communication, sense of the unique, wanderlust, sexual drive, and in general all reactions to a lopsided world in which the roles were reversed, were projected outward, so that no one was a problem to himself.
>
> "All spontaneity—taking a walk on a weekday, falling in love a second time, or, if you were a woman, going to the tavern by yourself for a schnapps—was frowned upon; in a pinch you could ask someone to dance or join in a song 'spontaneously', but that was all. Cheated out of your own biography and feelings, you became 'skittish'; you shied away from people, stopped talking, or, more seriously touched, went from house to house screaming.
>
> "The above-mentioned rites then functioned as a consolation. This consolation didn't address itself to you as a person; it simply swallowed you up, so that in the end you as an individual were content to be nothing, or at least nothing much."

A still bleaker picture of a similar village is to be found in *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*. Joseph Bloch, unemployed building worker, formerly a goalkeeper, picks up the cashier at the cinema, sleeps with her and then strangles her, apparently for no reason. He then makes his way to a country inn where he lies low, spending his time watching the trivial, purposeless routine of village life. He is obsessively aware of his own sensations and of each tiny sight or sound that they record. Yet he shows very little interest in his own fate and hardly seems conscious of what he has done.

CONSIDER FOR A MOMENT the salient elements in these three fictions: the unattached hero recoiling from emotional attachment, his indifference to morality, his lack of overt reaction to his mother's death, the girl he picks up casually (either a stranger or passing acquaintance), the apparently motiveless murder of another person. Is there not something familiar about them? Mix them all in together and you have Camus' *L'Etranger* very nearly in its entirety. I do not adduce this coincidence, remarkable though it is, in order to stress how derivative Handke's themes are or to deny his undeniable qualities as a writer. At its best, his writing is haunting and intense. But *L'Etranger* remains the classic literary study in alienation; it lacks

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Handke's vulgar Marxist gloss and it has the further advantage for critics that Camus left us in no doubt as to what he intended.

In *L'Etranger*, Meursault, we are told, refuses to cheat or to pretend to an emotion that he does not feel. In this he is a nobler soul than the guardians of conventional morality who hound him. It is not that he does not regret his mother's death; it is just that he does not feel grief at that moment and will not feign it. There can be no doubt about this interpretation. Camus himself in a much later preface to the book wrote:

> "For me, Meursault is not a piece of human wreckage, but a man who is poor, naked and in love with the sun which leaves no shadows. Far from being lacking in all feeling, he is inspired by a passion which is profound because unspoken, the passion for the absolute and for truth."

In fact, Camus goes even further:

> "One would not be much mistaken in reading *L'Etranger* as the story of a man who, without any heroics, accepts to die for the truth."

Now this is all very rum. After all, Meursault is tried for killing an Arab. And if he refuses to lie about his own feelings, he is ready to concoct a letter for Raymond, the plug-ugly pimp, in order to deceive an Arab girl into going to bed with Raymond so that he can then beat her up. He also agrees to help Raymond escape from her brother's vengeance and from the police. And when he murders an Arab, either because he believes his own life to be in danger or because he has a touch of the sun, he shows no revulsion or regret. In Conor Cruise O'Brien's words, "these episodes show him as indifferent to truth as he is to cruelty." And if it is true that the proximate cause of Meursault's execution is his refusal to woo the court by feigning grief for his mother, he did in fact kill a man. To claim that he died for the truth is a childish distortion. Meursault is no more a martyr for truth than any psychopath who shows no signs of repentance at his trial. To say "I did it and I am not sorry" is not generally regarded as a sufficient defence to a murder charge.

We are instructed to admire Meursault for his authenticity, his refusal to surrender to the pieties or to suppress his feelings. Handke's protagonists are by contrast primarily the victims of social processes. And yet it is surely intended that we should admire them too for their exercise of inner freedom, their refusal to slip into the fraudulent slime of human relationships, the dignity, however pitiful, of their solitude. For their apparent refusal to ask for sympathy or affection, we are to accord them both. From Werther to Handke, the low-spirited egoist has been tugging at the intelligentsia's heartstrings. A touch of the psychopath has only intensified his farouche charm.

BUT WHEN THE EGOIST goes beyond romantic poses to elaborate what he presents as a comprehensive critique of society, then his striking assertions must be received with less indulgence and closer attention. We must examine some of the terms he flings about. First of all, we ought to question the privileged status of the outsider himself. Alienation is just as much a fossilisation as conformism. The alienated man is just as much thrown up by heredity and environment as the pillar of society. He is an outsider in the sense that he is extruded by society, not detached from it. He has no more right to claim individuality than a bourgeois insider.

Individuality is not a direct function of articulateness. You can be strong and silent (or for that matter weak and garrulous) without in any way losing your individual quality. Village life in a traditional society, far from successfully repressing individuality, often tends to heighten awareness of it. The manner in which a man orders a drink or talks to his wife or sings in church is a matter of close and continuing observation. His realised personality, far from being obliterated by ritual and convention, is thrown into high relief. To take the matter a stage further, even in institutions like prisons or monasteries, the uniformity of dress (whether voluntary or not) merely emphasises the obdurate singularity of each inmate. These outward and visible signs are constant reminders of an inner uniqueness which is precisely the thing that tyranny is least able to touch. When people are destroyed by circumstances it is not their individuality that is destroyed but their happiness or even their sanity. To say that Peter Handke's mother had a sad life because she did not understand her social situation is both to patronise her and to trivialise her fate. These slick elisions between the life of an individual and the structure of a society are anything but humanist, in that they take man to be such an easily degradable substance.

The young Handke no less than the young Camus demonstrates in his work that his concept of the individual is both inconsistent and dishonest. To accept Meursault's one virtue—his refusal to lie about his own feelings—as a proof of his authenticity is to accept a pathetically shrivelled view of "a free man." If that phrase is to carry any real force, it must surely entail the idea of man as a responsible agent, not a being whose only free actions are the honest expression of his impulses but one who also stretches his consciousness to take account of the consequences of his actions and the relationship between them.

It is of the essence of what we mean by a free agent that he should know what he is doing. If a man lies or murders without having a reason "of his own", that suggests that he is acting in accord-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ance with the reasons of others. He is under the compulsion of biology, or society, or another person. The supposedly gratuitous act is gratuitous only in the sense that the reasons for it are not the conventional ones. The "gratuitous" murderer may have one of several reasons—desire to demonstrate his indifference to bourgeois morality or his coolness of nerve, wish to revenge himself on the world as a whole rather than on the particular victim which entails random selection of that victim, pleasure in killing and so on. But to describe a person who has *no* reasons of his own for his action as "free" is to rob the term freedom of any meaning. Freedom is inseparable from the idea of agency.

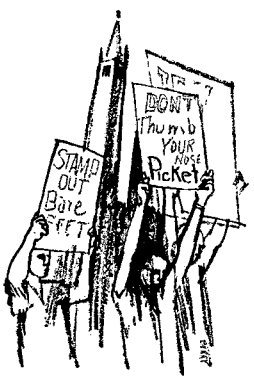
Yet once concede that freedom involves agency and agency involves responsibility, then the shrivelled artificiality of alienation-fiction becomes apparent. We cannot dumbly accept the author's special pleading for Bloch or Meursault. After reading of the murders they commit, we cannot nod and pass on, charmed by the fey numbness of the narration without asking ourselves certain questions about the nature of the pleasure we had derived. What has happened is that under the guise of moral and literary seriousness, we are enjoying the thrills of tough-guy cheap fiction. Behind the hard covers of a portentous existentialist parable, we are really reading, not even Simenon or Patricia Highsmith, but a kind of second-rate Mickey Spillane.

The reader's sympathy is abused not because Handke taps it on behalf of people who feel cut off from the ordinary worlds of thought and feeling and who find themselves unable to make natural and authentic connections with other people. The abuse lies in the way he exploits that real and specific pathos to illustrate and strengthen political morals which may not properly be derived from it. When Dickens enlisted a character like Smike to draw attention to social evil, the moral was inherent in the situation of the character. Smike took his shape and had his being only in the context of Dotheboys Hall. The same with Gissing's victims of poverty. The links between poverty and the warping of character, between social injustice and individual misfortune, are directly established.

By contrast, Handke's far more radical critique of society rests on evidence which is tangential, fragmentary, and equivocal. The bold outlines of a political manifesto cannot be given dramatic form by a cast of vague and elusive characters. The appeal of the cryptic, bitter melancholy which Handke's writing at its best exhales cannot, with any degree of integrity, be pressed into the service of the modish crudities of a New Left.

A New Guru of the Paris Intellectuals

Gramsci in France—By François Fejtö



THE AWAKENING OF INTEREST in Antonio Gramsci[1] among French intellectuals came in the aftermath of the upheavals created by the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU—deStalinisation, and especially the events in Poland and the Hungarian uprising in 1956.

Their repercussions gave rise to two types of criticism of the Stalinist system. One was "to the right", *i.e.* revisionist and democratic; this was the predominant line. But there was also a "leftist" critique which rejected Stalinism as a bureaucratic, terroristic "deviation" from Leninism, a "betrayal" of the working-class essence of the Revolution. What most fascinated these left-wing anti-Stalinists about the Hungarian and Polish crises was the emergence of "workers' councils"—*conseils ouvriers* (in France), *Arbeiterräte* (in Germany, as in the *Räte Republik*)—as autonomous organs of a working class whose aim was to dislodge the triple yoke of the totalitarian State, the all-powerful Party, and the trade unions subordinated to it. Now that the myth of the Party had collapsed along with the giant statue of Stalin looming over Budapest, an alternative sprang up—the myth of "councilism."

Regardless of the particular historic conditions which gave birth to the revolutionary councils and committees in Poland and Hungary, the primarily *national* character of those movements —and the fact that the councils had demanded the restoration of political democracy!—a number

[1] Last year saw the 40th anniversary of his death; and in Italy it was celebrated (on the Left) as if it were a Saint's Day, with mass congregations of the faithful and devout articles in the Marxist (and liberal-left) press. He was born in Ales, Sardinia on 22 January 1891 and died (in Rome) on 21 April 1937. Among his writings which have been translated into English are: *Letters from Prison* (Cape, 1975), *Prison Notebooks* (Lawrence & Wishart, 1971, n.e. 1973) and *Ten Essays* (Institute for Workers' Control, 1969).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of left-wing intellectuals reflecting various shades of Trotskyism and anarchism greeted the Polish and Hungarian workers' councils as the grandchildren of the Russian "soviets" of 1917 and of the councils which proliferated in central Europe, Italy, and elsewhere between 1918 and 1920. At the same time some Communist intellectuals, frustrated by Maurice Thorez's obduracy and the rigidity of the French CP, which was refusing any kind of comprehensive analysis of the crisis which had shaken the Soviet empire, became aware of the greater flexibility and openness of the Italian Communists.

In the wake of the 1956 crises there surfaced, alongside the myth of the councils, the legend (partly, but *only* partly, justified by the facts) of the superior level of political understanding of Italian Communism. And lurking behind Palmiro Togliatti, the author of the famous article in *Nuovi Argomenti* which caused an equal stir in Paris, stood the mysterious and hitherto inaccessible figure of Gramsci, hailed even before his writings had begun to be translated into French as a sort of Lenin substitute for the Western world, a pioneer of the new paths barred by thirty years of Stalinism.

THE FIRST STUDIES OF GRAMSCI appeared in the review *Arguments*, founded in late 1956 by Edgar Morin, Jean Duvignaud, Kostas Axélos and a few other defectors from the CP. This review stood at the confluence of the two currents of anti-Stalinism, Revisionist-reformist and Left-revolutionary. It had organic links with the group of Italian intellectuals whose mouthpiece was the review *Ragionamenti*; and Roberto Guiducci, a member of that group, published a study of Gramsci's role and ideas in *L'Ordine nuovo*,[2] in the fourth issue of *Arguments*. The same issue contained a note by Pierre Naville on the history of Workers' Councils, in which he analysed the ideas put into circulation by *L'Ordine nuovo*. To the best of my knowledge, it was also *Arguments* which saw the first appearance of Robert Paris, who has since devoted himself to translating the complete works of Gramsci, with several volumes already published by Gallimard. In *Arguments* he produced a very lively analysis of Gramsci's Notes on Machiavelli.

The importance of *Arguments* in the revival of French political thought after 1956 cannot be too highly rated. It was *Arguments* which introduced or popularised the heretical Marxists from Georg Lukács and Karl Korsch to Herbert Marcuse among intellectual and university circles. It should be mentioned that a selection of articles published from 1956 to 1962—the date of the review's voluntary closure—has just been published in two paperback volumes (*Collection* 10/18).

But although people were starting to talk about Gramsci as early as 1956, his hour of glory did not arrive until after May 1968—in the feverish atmosphere of casting about for alternative sources and myths that characterised the post-May *contestation* generation. It was undoubtedly the three great transmitters of avant-garde intellectual fashion—*Le Monde*, the *Nouvel Observateur*, and the University of Vincennes—which played the main part in propagating the ideas of the Sardinian philosopher. It was no easy task, since the Hegelian and Crocean background of his thinking is almost totally alien to the Parisian intelligentsia. Never mind! Louis Althusser, while reserving the role of great reformer of French Marxism for himself, bowed down before the "genius" of Gramsci and took inspiration from his ideas on "class hegemony" to write one of his most famous articles—on "State Ideological Apparatuses"—to which (according to Jacques Julliard in 1974) it was "pointless to cite the reference, since any revolutionary, be he Communist or left-wing Socialist, is bound to know it by heart." (Today, three years later, Althusser has been eclipsed by new gurus.)[3] On his own side Althusser's opponent Roger Garaudy has popularised the Gramscian term "new historical block" to set the seal on the alliance of the working class with the intellectuals and the new technician strata. In view of the otherwise reformist, idealist, and even neo-Christian lines taken by Garaudy, the left-wing Gramscians have descried the stealing of clothes.

Meanwhile, since 1969 a number of introductory works have met with a degree of success: in 1970 the translation of Guiseppe Fiori's life of Gramsci and Jean-Marc Piotte's *La pensée politique de Gramsci* came out in quick succession; in 1971, the translation of the Prison Letters; in 1972, Hugues Portelli's monograph *Gramsci et le bloc historique;* in 1973 *Lire Gramsci*, by Dominique Grisoni and Robert Maggiori; and finally, in 1974, *Pour Gramsci*, by Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, already well-known for her previous book *De la Chine*, a monument to the Cult of

[2] A revolutionary socialist periodical founded in 1918 by A. Gramsci, A. Tasca, Terracini, and Togliatti.

[3] But in England, still cut off from the continent by slow ferries, the "Althusser boom" is now growing on the Left. New Left Books in London have just published his *For Marx* (1977), the fifth in a series of belated translations: *Reading Capital* (1970), *Lenin & Philosophy* (1971), *Politics & History* (1972) and *Essays in Self-Criticism* (1976). On Louis Althusser, see in ENCOUNTER (October 1973) Sidney Hook's "For Louis Althusser."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mao in France. Since then, "La Macciocchi" has been another Parisian institution, side by side with Jacques Lacan, Gilles Deleuze, Roland Barthes, and Yves Saint-Laurent. Up in arms against the opportunism of the Italian CP and by extension against the French CP, which persisted in ignoring her (her book on China was banned from the annual *Fete de "L'Humanité"* sale), from the outset Macciocchi presented Gramsci, on whom she lectured at the University of Vincennes, as "the Lenin of today." She popularised the concept of the *"intellectuel organique"*, which has enjoyed no less a success than did Sartre's *"intellectuel engagé"*, now quite outmoded. In particular she stressed the affinity of Gramsci's political thought with that of her other idol, Mao Tse-tung. This comparison has been heavily criticised, to the point of ridicule—wrongly, it seems to me, since Mao and Gramsci did in fact have various points in common. Both were Leninists, one in the Chinese, the other in the Italian manner. Both were original spirits and hard to classify; both had populist accents and liked to talk about the "masses"; both had anarchist leanings but were also élitists. Both of them attached great importance to the "superstructures", and to the destruction of "the hegemony of the bourgeoisie over culture" (meaning humanist culture). Where Maria Macciocchi takes complete leave of analysis and all good sense and floats off into absurdity is when she offers Mao and Gramsci as guides towards the solution of the problems set by the contemporary economic, political, and social crisis of the industrial countries.

WHATEVER RESERVATIONS MAY have been expressed here and there about Macciocchi's interpretation of his thought, Gramsci has since been adopted by the French intellectual Left. It sees in him not only the Leninist and ideologue of the *"Prince Collectif"*, the Party—whose unity and controlling role Gramsci went on wishing to preserve, even in his opposition to the line of the Comintern and of Togliatti. It also sees him as the champion of "councilism" and the "revolution from below", the evangelist of "the capacity of the working class to rule itself by itself", and the adversary of the legalistic opportunism embodied by the CP and the Communist-dominated trade unions. It is partly thanks to Macciocchi that the reading of Gramsci by French intellectuals—all in search of a new non-totalitarian, non-democratic doctrine—has been angled towards a moralistic, or perhaps a *culturalist*, anarchism. It is in this way that Jacques Julliard—one of the most interesting of the "organic intellectuals", a leader of the CFDT and a militant socialist—sees the "historic glory" of Gramsci in the fact of his having

> "wrenched Marxism away from being a realistic, resigned, near-reactionary discourse about power relationships, and raised it to the level of a strategy of consent."[4]

But Gramsci, as always, offers more questions than answers. Thus, for Julliard, reading the Sardinian philosopher brings up

> "the question of knowing whether the working class can in fact put forward its candidacy for the direction of Western society without first seeking to gain acceptance for its own system of values, its own vision of the world."

"Where are these values?" Julliard asks. "What holds them together?" And he quotes Gramsci: "The crisis lies precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new is unable to be born."

YET WHEN IT COMES to the "new thing which must be born", it is arguable that another Italian, Bruno Rizzi (whose pioneer work *The Bureaucratisation of the World*, published in 1939 and pillaged by James Burnham, has just been republished in France and Italy), was a better prophet than Antonio Gramsci. For unlike Gramsci, in the late 1920s Rizzi lost faith

[4] Jacques Julliard, "Le 'Lénine de l'Occident'", *Nouvel Observateur* (13 April 1974).

NOVELS
by J. Inchardi
$10 each

Lines On The Death Of A Fisherman

Three Jews In A Tub

Dreamship

Yurros

A Paper Toy

Intercurse

Order by mail from
Sirius Books, Box 177
Freeport, Maine 04032, USA

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the "ruling capability of the working class." He realised—and was one of the first to theorise about—what Franz Kafka had noticed in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution. As Gustav Janouch has recalled:

> "We met a large group of workmen who were marching with flags and banners to a meeting. Kafka said: "... Behind them already are the secretaries, officials, professional politicians, all the modern satraps for whom they are preparing the way to power.... The Revolution evaporates, and leaves behind only the slime of a new bureaucracy."[5]

Rizzi knew what Milovan Djilas was to discover a quarter-of-a-century later, that the social revolutions of modern times can give birth only to "bureaucratic states, with the new ruling class made up of the political, trade union, and technical bureaucracy."

Gramsci himself rejected this pessimistic view. What he was aiming at in his advocacy of "the hegemony of the proletariat" was a "different socialism"—more libertarian, popular, and democratic than the Russian Revolution. But in spite of the anarchising elements in his thinking—those which make certain leftists today (at once anti-liberal and anti-communist, extremist and extra-parliamentary) lay claim to him—there can be no forgetting that Gramsci was basically a Leninist, and that his "theory of hegemony" was only an adaptation to Italian, Western conditions of Lenin's basic strategy. The line he laid down for Italian Communism (and which the *PCI* followed without reference to him during Togliatti's lifetime) was one of gradual infiltration of all sectors of civil society, starting with cultural activities—education, literature, arts, mass media—before embarking on the overthrow of the state. But as Salvadori says,[6] underlying this complex strategy we again find the Leninist, totalitarian vision of the world, in the sense that the "*total* character of Marxism, with its unity of theory and practice, is not a subject of dialogue with other visions of the world, but only a means of conquering the other positions, so as to replace one hegemony with another" (in this case, Roman Catholicism with Leninist Marxism).

AT ANY RATE, GRAMSCIANS in and out of France can now take stock of how the idea of hegemony is starting to become a reality in Italy. All they have to do is to visit Bologna, which has been governed for years by a Communist town council. There they will see how "the masses participate directly in local government through novel forms such as neighbourhood councils."

"The masses don't go in for romance", the Bologna Mayor says.

> "They don't feel the pull some intellectuals feel of a vague and desperate romantic rebellion.... Today intellectuals are called upon to perform the more positive and possibly humbler task of administration, organisation and government."[7]

At long last they have become "organic intellectuals." As for the rest, the awkward ones, all those who dislike the "proletarian" hegemony, students who insult Communists, young workers who rebel against trade union bureaucracy, those violent extremists who, according to the Communist Mayor of Bologna, are the "objective allies of Strauss and Fanfani", *i.e.* "reaction at its worst", the police of Bologna have shown all Italy, threatened by a tangle of confrontations, the proper way to handle them.

So does Gramscian hegemony turn out to be thoroughly modern, revised and fairly refined, and very Italian. Only it has, alas, too many things in common with Lenin's dictatorship of the Party, and even with the fascist corporate state of the not quite forgotten Benito Mussolini.

---

[5] Gustav Janouch, *Conversations With Kafka* (trans. Goronwy Rees), their conversations between 1920 and 1924 (André Deutsch, 1971).

[6] M. Salvadori, *Gramsci e il PCI: due conzezioni dell'egemonia*, in *Mondoperaio*, November 1976, quoted by Ronchey, *Accadde in Italia* 1968–1977, (Garzanti, 1977), p. 146.

[7] Statements by the Mayor of Bologna, Renato Zangheri, *Le Monde*, 13 July 1977.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PHILOSOPHY & PSYCHOLOGY

Jacques Lacan

ANIKA LEMAIRE

Translated by David Macey

The work of Jacques Lacan, eminent French psychoanalyst, is recognized as being of vital importance to psychoanalysts, philosophers and all those concerned with the study of man and language. This is the first general exposition of Lacan's important, but difficult, work now in translation, revised from the French edition. The book also has an introduction by Jacques Lacan. £7.25

Berkeley

GEORGE PITCHER

A thorough-going exploration of Berkeley's metaphysical views, this study shows that they develop from his reflections about sense perception, and were formed in conscious opposition to Locke. The influential *New Theory of Vision* is discussed at length, as is Berkeley's conception of the mind and his doctrine of 'passive obedience'. *Arguments of the Philosophers Series* £7.50

Lukács and Heidegger

Towards a New Philosophy

LUCIEN GOLDMANN

Translated by William Q. Boelhower

The distinguished Marxist philosopher and sociologist Lucien Goldmann died in Paris in 1970. His death was a loss to both European sociology and philosophy, and the publication of this work is of special interest in that it represents his thinking on two other leading representatives of the European movement in philosophy. Based on university lectures which Goldmann gave in 1967–8, it offers an introduction to the work of Lukács and Heidegger. £3.50

R. D. Laing

His work and its Relevance for Sociology

MARTIN HOWARTH-WILLIAMS

This study, by a sociologist, provides the most rigorous and comprehensive review to appear so far of R. D. Laing's work and theoretical development. Martin Howarth-Williams illuminates the internal coherence of Laing's aims through the various stages of his work and shows how his ideas are shaped by consistent philosophic pre-suppositions and influences. £4.50

Human Action and Its Psychological Investigation

ALAN GAULD and JOHN SHOTTER

For a hundred years psychology has been held in thrall by a great vision: that of a scientific psychology able to explain human behaviour in terms of a limited number of fundamental principles. The authors argue that, regarding the actions of human agents, such a vision can never be fulfilled. A psychology of human actions must instead be 'hermeneutical', human action being understood by interpretation of their 'meanings'. They illustrate the conduct of an hermeneutical psychology, with outlines of central conceptual inquiries and indications of empirical inquiries which might be undertaken within the framework of such a psychology. £5.50

From Oedipus to Moses

Freud's Jewish Identity

MARTHE ROBERT

Through references in Freud's correspondence and his dream analyses the author describes Freud's struggle to reconcile his Jewish background with the scientific, secular and rationalist mood of late nineteenth-century Vienna, and the relationship between his Jewish identity and his theory of psychoanalysis.

The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

£5.00

ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL

39 Store Street, London WC1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Special Book Section

Philosophy & Psychology

Word Wars

On Thought & Language—By ROY HARRIS

WORDS, AS THE SIGNS employed in language, may be considered from two opposite points of view: either as material entities (i.e. as sounds, if spoken, and as visible marks, if written), or alternatively as expressions of thought. At least, so we are told on page 1 of the most influential linguistic manual of modern times, the Port Royal grammar of 1660. Accordingly, two separate provinces of intellectual inquiry appear to be mapped out: a study of the spoken or written *forms* of language, and a study of *what the forms mean.* But to whom this latter province belongs the authors of the Port Royal treatise do not venture to say.

Neither before the Port Royal grammar nor since has the study of how thoughts are expressed in words been allocated to any one academic discipline within the Western tradition of scholarship. Grammar, Logic and Rhetoric divided it between them throughout antiquity and the middle ages. Latterly, the philosopher, the linguist and the psychologist have each laid claim to part of that inheritance. And if there has been little or no squabbling over it, that has doubtless been due to the wide tract of academic no-man's-land separating the sovereignties involved—in short, to the lack of serious interest in developing a comprehensive science of meaning-analysis for natural languages. Philosophy, linguistics and psychology have had more urgent matters to attend to.

That is not to say no one ever thought it worth while hoisting a flag over the unoccupied territory. In the 19th century, John Stuart Mill proclaimed understanding the grammatical structure of a sentence to be "the most elementary part of Logic." And throughout the 20th century a concern with language, it is often said, has been characteristic of Western philosophy. But usually this philosophical concern stopped diplomatically short of setting foot anywhere where one might risk getting involved in the systematic semantic description of natural languages. For a long time linguists too seemed happy to keep out of the area. In spite of the official opening of a branch called "Semantics" in the late 19th century, which dealt primarily with lexical meanings, they were content to concentrate most of their endeavours in the first of the Port Royal provinces, organising the investigation of forms and combinations of forms. It even became for a while a matter of principle, at least in the USA, to exclude the study of meaning from "scientific" linguistics. On the psychological front, likewise, the investigation of how words expressed thoughts was hardly a respectable enterprise during the hey-day of behaviourism, while the Piagetian approach, although concerned with mental operations, treated the particular forms of their linguistic manifestation as being of secondary interest only. So no one showed very much interest in the actual occupation of Port Royal's second province, apart from a few Saussurean structuralists, who had it all more or less to themselves.

TODAY THE POSITION looks very different. Saussurean structuralism (at least, in its plain, old-fashioned, pre-generative version) has lost its crusading fervour except in the marginal areas of semantics, where it still forms the basis of a number of quaint and fragile intellectual alliances: e.g. between the psychoanalytic theories

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cornell University Press

"A work whose vast scope and insight will be appreciated."*

A Companion to Wittgenstein's "Philosophical Investigations"

By GARTH HALLETT. "After a 35-page general introduction that sets out the background of the *Investigations,* Hallett turns to a painstaking, extensive examination of the work itself."—**Library Journal* £20.00

Memory and Mind

By NORMAN MALCOLM. "This is both first-rate writing and first-rate philosophy. It will no doubt become a standard work.... Most highly recommended."—*Choice* £9.25

Thought and Knowledge

Essays

By NORMAN MALCOLM. This book brings together nine major essays on the philosophy of mind that Professor Malcolm has written since his last collection (*Knowledge and Certainty*) was published in 1963. Writing in a clear, nontechnical style that will appeal to the nonprofessional, he presents and defends interesting alternatives to common views on important topics in the philosophy of mind. £7.30

Naming, Necessity, and Natural Kinds

Edited by STEPHEN P. SCHWARTZ. Here is a challenging collection of key papers setting forth the new theory of reference expounded by Keith S. Donnellan, Saul Kripke, and Hilary Putnam, written by those central figures and by Irving M. Copi, Gareth Evans, William K. Goosens, Alvin Plantinga, and W. V. Quine. The introduction by Stephen P. Schwartz discusses the challenge that the theory poses to traditional thinking and assesses its contribution to philosophy. Paper, £4.25; Cloth, £11.00

Phenomenology and Logic

By ROBERT S. TRAGESSER. With precision and clarity, Professor Tragresser draws on the views of Husserl regarding the existence of abstract entities to offer an alternative to the ontological relativity espoused by Quine and other philosophers in the analytic tradition. £7.30

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS ITHACA AND LONDON

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Lacan,[1] the filmology of Christian Metz,[2] and the architectural semiotics of George Baird. All these are doubtless manifestations of what Jacques Derrida attacks as cultural "logocentrism."[3] (Saussure, with his insistence on thought and sound as the two kinds of "substance" correlated by linguistic structure, was a logocentric theoretician *par excellence*.) But forces no less militantly logocentric have moved in to take over from the retreating Saussureans. The past two decades have seen unprecedented activity in this academic no-man's-land. Just as moves were being made to annex semantics and incorporate it into the new, expanding empire of generative linguistics, there took place two highly successful sorties from the philosophical side into the undefended marches of meaning.

On the one hand there was a quiet infiltration of plain-clothes philosophers exploiting the low-profile techniques of linguistic occupation so ably developed by the late J. L. Austin.[4] Their persuasive line was that meaning, after all, is a practical matter of how to get various things done by using words appropriately; and philosophers, surely, have just as much right to be concerned with that as anybody. On the other hand, there was also a noisy invasion from a quite different philosophical camp, which sent in troops chanting Tarski's famous rallying call " 'Snow is white' is true if and only if snow is white."[5] Their creed was that meaning is ultimately a matter of distinguishing between truth and falsity, and the semantics of natural languages had better come to terms with that fact.

Now a generation ago philosophical incursions of this nature would have provoked reactions of suspicion or outright hostility from the neighbouring disciplines. Instead, they have met with a sympathetic and even enthusiastic reception, especially in linguistics. Linguists used to be particularly fond of pointing out how inadequate was the sparse intellectual equipment operated by philosophers when it came to dealing with the richness and variety of meaning in natural languages. Yet for the time being at least, linguists seem curiously willing to accept the dominance of philosophers' methods and formulations in semantics. It is of some interest as far as contemporary history of ideas is concerned to ask how and why this remarkable change of attitude has come about. It is all the more interesting in that the Austinians and the Tarskians represent two radically different approaches to language. For the Austinians, putting thoughts into words involves understanding the use of words as tools for action in the context of interpersonal exchanges, and the non-social use of language—talking to yourself—is merely secondary. Whereas for the Tarskians, putting thoughts into words involves understanding what it is to tell the truth, and to this all else is geared. The essential difference hinges on audience-participation. You cannot sensibly make requests, bets, promises, apologies, etc. if there is no one else to ask, to bet with, promise or apologise to. But presumably you can always speak the truth, even if there is no one except you to hear it.

THE SUCCESS OF the Tarskians becomes explicable if one looks at the development of semantic theorising in the context of the history of generative grammar, a subject lucidly surveyed in a recent book—*Semantics*, by Janet Dean Fodor.[6] In the early 1960s, the semantic component of Chomsky's generative grammar was envisaged as a system which operated on an input of syntactic deep structures which were independently generated. But soon dissidents within the transformationalist ranks began to argue that separate deep structures were unnecessary: all that was needed as initial input to the generative system were representations of sentence-meanings. This revolt came to be known as the "generative semantics" movement. (Chomsky's somewhat ineffectual countermove was to put forward a revision called the "Extended Standard Theory", in which both syntactic deep structures and also surface structures supplied the input to the semantic component. More recently, in place of the "Extended Standard Theory", he has proposed a hardly more convincing "Trace Theory", in which the semantic interpretations of sentences are

---

[1] Some of Lacan's writings have recently become available in an English translation. *Ecrits: A Selection*. By JACQUES LACAN. Translated by ALAN SHERIDAN. Tavistock, £12.00.

[2] For a sympathetic assessment of Metz's semiotics of the cinema, see the essay by Søren Kjørup in *The Arts and Cognition* (edited by D. PERKINS and B. LEONDAR. Johns Hopkins University Press, £12.40); or, for more critical remarks, *System and Structure* by ANTHONY WILDEN (1972: now reprinted in paperback. Tavistock, £5.25).

[3] There is now an English translation of Derrida's *Of Grammatology* by G. C. SPIVAK, who provides in the same volume a useful introduction to Derrida's work. Johns Hopkins University Press, £14.65, paper £4.45.

[4] Notably in his posthumously published *How to do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

[5] *Cf. Truth and Meaning*, edited by G. EVANS and J. MCDOWELL (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976).

[6] *Semantics: Theories of Meaning in Generative Grammar*. By JANET DEAN FODOR. Harvester, £12.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

derived just from their surface structures supplemented by "traces" of deep structure.)

Leaving technicalities aside, what the generative semanticists proposed was to use generative rules to supply the appropriate sentence structures for postulated meanings, instead of supplying sentence structures, independently given, with appropriate interpretations. Accordingly, the semantic representations from which generative semanticists began had to be of a highly abstract nature. This was necessary in order to allow for a uniform treatment of large classes of words which, although differing individually in meaning one from another, behaved in identical fashion up to a certain point in combinations, and in their meaning relations with words of other classes. In short, the need arose for semantic concepts of the same order of generality as syntactic notions like "sentence", "noun", "verb", etc. The abstract semantic representations were thus found to require the use of variables for predicates and arguments, and of constants for connectives, in a manner exactly analogous to logicians' ways of representing the form of propositions. From this it was but a short step to recognising that in generative semantics one needed "a logic which is capable of accounting for all correct inferences made in natural languages and which rules out incorrect ones" (Lakoff). The initial semantic representations of sentences began to be called "logical forms."

It was not long, however, before these so-called "logical forms" were being criticised precisely on the ground that they were not really logical forms, i.e. they were symbolisms inferior to those already developed by logicians for handling logical calculi. So logic was seen as offering just what generative grammar was looking for as a foundation for semantics. In this way, the basic aim of descriptive semantics comes to be identified, e.g. recently by Ruth M. Kempson,[7] as the setting up of "logical forms from which all inferences relevant to analytic truth can be deduced." Semantics is accordingly represented as being "a bridge discipline between linguistics and philosophy."

WHAT IS EVIDENT from this curious chapter of intellectual history is that the important question about semantics, as far as generative grammarians are concerned, has always been how to integrate it with the rest of the apparatus of rules of grammar. The issue between the gener-

[7] *Semantic Theory*. By RUTH M. KEMPSON. Cambridge University Press, £8.50, paper £2.95.

CHANCE, CAUSE, REASON

An Inquiry into the Nature of Scientific Evidence

ARTHUR W BURKS

Burks, a distinguished philosopher and computer scientist, develops a comprehensive theory to resolve a fundamental set of problems within the philosophy of science. What is the nature of scientific knowledge? What are the essential characteristics of cause, effect and laws of nature? What is probability? How is probability related to chance and scientific evidence? What are the roles of reason and experience, of discovery and argument, in science? Burks's answers to these questions involve a critique and reformulation of inductive logic and the logic of probability, causality and induction.
£19.25

The University of Chicago Press

126 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ative semanticists and their opponents was seen as being an issue about the "centrality" of semantics; but it might with more objectivity have been described as an issue about how and where to tack semantics on. For in terms of the development of the generative model of language, a semantic component was an afterthought. As soon as a stage is reached where the semantic component borrows its notation from logic, it is hardly surprising that when questions of semantic metatheory arise (i.e. questions asking exactly what it is that "semantic representations" are supposed to represent) the answer should be given that semantic representations are constructs for articulating the constitution of items to which truth values can be assigned, and the relations between them.

So we find ourselves—with a feeling of *déjà vu* which some of the practitioners in this field are doubtless too young to experience—trying to make sense of that tired old piece of mysticism about propositions being meanings of sentences. (It is possible to effect a superficial demystification by refusing to talk about propositions, and speaking only of truth-conditions of sentences; but it amounts to the same thing in the end.) That this idea is still going the rounds at all, let alone being hailed as an important "insight" in linguistics, says less about the perspicacity of linguistic theorists than about the current prestige—one might almost call it "cult-figure status"—of Frege (whose three essays *Der Gedanke, Die Verneinung* and *Gedankengefüge* are now available in a new English translation[8]). Whether what either Frege or Tarski said was ever intended to be taken seriously as a basis for the semantic description of natural languages is a different matter. One of the professional hazards of being a prophet is that you have no guarantee what your disciples will decide to take notice of.

IT WOULD BE MISLEADING, however, apart from being unduly depressing, to imply that all linguists share this extremely narrow outlook on the study of meaning. But if not all do, this is, paradoxically, in part due to the incursion from the other philosophical camp, the Austinians. For the teachings of Austin and his successors (e.g. Grice) open up potential horizons for linguistics which seem almost to be boundless. This, indeed, is sometimes said to be why the mere linguist cannot possibly hope to look that far, and why he would be wiser to limit his semantics to what truth-conditional theory can handle.

It is true that in the early days some linguists were so impressed on discovering Austin that they fell over themselves trying to incorporate Austinian concepts into linguistic theory. There were those, for example, who claimed enthusiastically that every declarative sentence began with an underlying performative (so that e.g. *It is raining* had to be analysed as if it were short for something like [*I declare that*] *it is raining*), thereby demonstrating, *inter alia*, a failure to grasp the point of distinguishing between performatives and constatives. Later, on the other hand, it became fashionable to emphasise Austin's own doubts about the validity of that distinction, not least because it constitutes, if accepted, a major obstacle to the programme of explicating sentence-meanings in terms of truth-conditions. For, to take one of Austin's own examples, it is far from clear that it makes sense to talk about the truth of "I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow", any more than it makes sense to talk about the truth of saying "Damn!"

In this connection, it is interesting to note that the latest full-length study of Austin's work by a philosopher argues that Austin was wrong to doubt the validity of distinguishing between performatives and constatives, and did so because his own analysis of the distinction was in part defective.[9] Whether this is right or not, the significance of Austin's impact on linguistics will undoubtedly turn out to have been that his work provided linguists with a timely and lively reminder of one basic fact which the generativists of the '50s and '60s had all but lost sight of: that language is made for (and by) language-users. Words cannot be considered in isolation from their contexts of use without running the risk of serious distortion or misrepresentation.

JUST HOW, AND HOW SUCCESSFULLY, contemporary linguistics has managed to assimilate these diverse philosophical influences can now be judged from John Lyons's two-volume survey entitled *Semantics*.[10] Professor Lyons seems to have taken over the role first established by the late Stephen Ullmann, who specialised in presenting to an English-reading public scholarly, balanced and comprehensive reports of what was going on in the field of semantics, at least on the linguist's side of it. It is particularly instructive to compare Professor Lyons's present book with his *Introduction to*

---

[8] *Gottlob Frege. Logical Investigations.* Edited by P. T. GEACH. Blackwell, £2.75.

[9] *J. L. Austin: A Critique of Ordinary Language Philosophy.* By KEITH GRAHAM. Harvester, £8.50.

[10] *Semantics.* By JOHN LYONS. 2 vols. Cambridge University Press, £27.00, paper £8.90.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Theoretical Linguistics of 1968, in order to see what changes have taken place in the study of meaning, viewed from a fairly conservative, traditional, but open-minded position in linguistics. As a rough guide, one might note some entries in the index to *Semantics* which did not appear a decade ago in *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics*. They include *alethic logic, atomic proposition, Bedeutung, Bezeichnung, biconditional, constative, conversational implicatures, illocutionary, neustic, operators, performative, phrastic, pragmatics, Sinn, speech acts, state-description, topic* and *truth-conditions*.

Professor Lyons is an unbiased and informative guide, and if he is not invariably as stimulating or as critical as one might wish, that may be because what he says often reflects what Dr Kempson describes as "the uncertainty which hangs over the entire subject" in linguistics at the present time. He voices well-founded misgivings about the performative analysis of sentence meanings, but offers the somewhat lame apology for model-theoretic semantics that although it may well appear "unnecessarily complex", none the less it is "no more than an attempt to take account of the factors which determine our interpretation of quite ordinary sentences"—a statement which begs just about all the pertinent questions one might want to ask concerning the general assumptions underlying model theory. Perhaps more significant than Professor Lyons's acceptance of the validity of logically oriented approaches to analysing meaning in natural languages are two interesting omissions from his book. In the course of more than 800 pages, it has virtually nothing to say about synonymy and paraphrase on the one hand, or about metaphor on the other: nothing, that is, about the two long-standing issues in descriptive semantics which most contemporary formalists have taken good care to avoid.

IT IS A SOMEWHAT different picture which emerges if one tries to follow the current semantic skirmishing from the psychological side. On the language-learning front, experimental psychologists, unlike their colleagues in theoretical linguistics, have given a distinctly warmer welcome to the Austinians than to the Tarskians. This is clear from Eve Clark's excellent survey, "First Language Acquisition."[11]

[11] In the first volume of the *Psycholinguistics Series*, entitled *Developmental and Pathological*. Edited by JOHN MORTON and JOHN C. MARSHALL. Elek, £4.95.

Thinking
Readings in Cognitive Science
Edited by P. N. JOHNSON-LAIRD and P. C. WASON
In this volume about the scientific study of thinking the editors have brought together a set of readings which draw on work in cognitive psychology, artificial intelligence, psycholinguistics and philosophy. The editors have tried to capture the sense of excitement attendant to the rapid and important advances in the disciplines concerned with human thinking.
Open University Set Book
Hard covers £17.50 net
Paperback £5.95 net

Philosophers of Peace and War
Kant, Clausewitz, Marx, Engels and Tolstoy
W. B. GALLIE
Intellectual eminence apart, what did Kant, Clausewitz, Marx, Engels and Tolstoy have in common? Professor Gallie argues that they made contributions to the understanding of the character and causes of war and of the possibility of peace between nations which were of unrivalled originality in their own times and remain of undiminished importance in ours. **£5.95 net**

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As she points out, the trend in research on how children learn to speak has moved away from the preoccupation with syntax which was a feature of the Chomsky-dominated 1960s. It has been realised that "learning languages is not just a matter of learning particular linguistic structures, it is also a matter of learning how to use them in order to communicate." Some would probably say that even this way of putting it is too redolent of implied respect for the Chomskyite past. They would prefer the outright assertion that learning languages is primarily a matter of learning how to communicate: particular linguistic structures are merely formalisations of devices for doing this.

MUCH THE SAME THEME is taken up in Elizabeth Bates's *Language and Context*,[12] in which the child's acquisition of pragmatic knowledge is integrated with Piaget's theory of genetic epistemology. Quoting Austin's dictum that "to say something is to do something", the author argues that "semantics is derived ontogenetically from pragmatics." At a more general level, all this ties in with a new recognition of the importance of communicational functions of language-using, which is stressed in different ways in the work of Dell Hymes[13] and Michael Halliday.[14] The former's concern with the "ethnography of communication" and the latter's insistence that "language is a product of the social process" have in common the thesis that linguistic phenomena cannot be properly understood except as part of social interaction. What is important about this emphasis in the long term is that it re-opens the whole theoretical question of what semiologists call the "problem of the subject",[15] and involves the validity of distinguishing "competence" from "performance".[16] History may look back on generative-transformational linguistics, with its arbitrarily narrow concept of "linguistic knowledge" and its curiously abstract "goals", as no more than a pseudo-science, a kind of latter-day phrenology, which never properly established the empirical bases for its theorising.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING that current research by psychologists tends to favour explaining language acquisition within a framework which is essentially Austinian rather than Tarskian. In adult speech, reporting the truth (as you see it) is one of the important things you can do with words, even if it is only one among many things, and even if you do not, *pace* Frege, agree that the important difference between the language of the stage and the language of everyday life is that "real" assertions are made only in the latter. But when we are considering the early stages of children's speech, it is not clear how truth-telling could even count as one of the basic communicational functions at all. To envisage the acquisition of semantic knowledge in terms of developing a gradual acquaintance with the truth-conditions of sentences is *prima facie* a quite implausible basis for examining how children learn what linguistic forms mean; whereas thinking of it in terms of the child's finding out how to get things done with words is quite a natural one.

Once we move away from the experimental field into what is sometimes called "speculative psychology", Austinian influence wanes. We find psycholinguistic queries about meaning being asked in ways which are already heavily biased towards Tarskian answers. For example, "How can a child learn the meanings of the predicates employed in his first language?" is a question which figures prominently in Jerry A. Fodor's new book *The Language of Thought*.[17] But the reader does not have far to go before he finds that this eminently practical-sounding question has been reformulated to bring it in line with the author's contention that learning any natural language *L* is a matter of learning the "truth definition" of *L*. Professor Fodor is, of course, an old campaigner in the field of semantics. But he is not too old a campaigner to have learnt some new manoeuvres, including how to bolster the plausibility of truth-conditional semantics by appeal to more scientific-sounding enterprises. Artificial Intelligence (of which a recommendable up-to-date account for sceptics is given by Margaret Boden[18]) is one of these.

What Professor Fodor wants to claim is that "you can't learn a language unless you already know one." In other words, the child already has to have a "language of ideas" before he can learn e.g. the language called "English." Professor Fodor defends this thesis against the obvious

---

[12] *Language and Context: The Acquisition of Pragmatics*. By ELIZABETH BATES. Academic Press, £14.95.

[13] *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. By DELL HYMES. Tavistock, £7.50.

[14] *Language as Social Semiotic: Social Interpretations of Language and Meaning*. By M. A. K. HALLIDAY. Edward Arnold, £9.95.

[15] For a recent discussion, see *Language and Materialism*. By ROSALIND COWARD and JOHN ELLIS. Routledge, £4.50, paper £2.25.

[16] Examined in Judith Greene's "Psycholinguistics: Competence and Performance" in *Communication and Understanding*. Edited by GODFREY VESEY. *Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures, vol. X*. Harvester, £10.00.

[17] *The Language of Thought*. By JERRY A. FODOR. Harvester, £10.50.

[18] *Artificial Intelligence and Natural Man*. By MARGARET BODEN. Harvester, £4.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

charge of infinite regress ("How does the child learn the language which he needs in order to learn the English language?") by maintaining that the "language of ideas" is innate. And in order to make sense of the notion of an innate language he enlists the aid of computers. The nature of languages and of cognitive processes, he alleges, is essentially "computational." Piaget, Bruner and others are castigated for failure to appreciate this basic fact. Furthermore, there is a difference between the "input-output language", in which a human being talks to the computer, and the "machine language" in which the computer "talks to itself." So "what avoids an infinite regress of compilers is the fact that the machine is *built* to use the machine language." We are invited to conclude that the problem of how a language-less child learns a language is not really a problem at all: for we had overlooked the fact that the child is not actually language-less, having already a built-in "language of thought."

IF IT WERE ALL AS SIMPLE as Professor Fodor suggests, we could heave a sigh of relief and go home. Unfortunately, there is a snag. The computer analogy will not do. For what any machine is built to use must be a *specific* language. Whereas what is apparently so remarkable about the human brain is that there is no *specific* language which it is built to use at all. In other words, the problem of making sense of the notion of an innate language is coextensive with the problem of making sense of the notion of a non-specific language. The efficacy of the computer's "machine language" is, as Professor Fodor points out, guaranteed by the actual "physics of the machine." But in so far as that is correct, it is just as misleading—and as absurd—to say that the machine "understands" its language without having learnt it, as to say that when I press the buzzer, the buzzer "understands" what that means, i.e. that it has to buzz.

As Timothy Potts observes in his paper "The Place of Structure in Communication" in *Communication and Understanding*, although "the notion that understanding the meaning of a sentence involves a computation is very congenial to our society, in which the prestige of the electronic computer has made of it a model for understanding human behaviour", there are perhaps good general reasons for treating that notion with suspicion. If we do not, we may find that we have become the intellectual dupes of a spurious superempiricism of machines.

The computer analogy is central, for instance, to the proposals lately put forward for a new branch of semantic inquiry called "psycho-lexicology", in an ambitious volume entitled *Perception and Language*.[19] Psycholexicology, according to its founders, is to be concerned with "the psychological study of the lexical component of language." The basic idea is that in order to use many everyday words, speakers need to be able to associate lexical items with sets of perceptual procedures for testing whether indicated objects or features of the environment fulfil certain conditions. A preliminary attempt has been made to sketch a system of "perceptual predicates" required as "a basis for object-recognition routines whose outputs can be taken as criteria for the applicability of linguistic labels", i.e. to draw up an inventory of the types of perceptual judgment human beings have to make in coping with the physical world in which they live. Psycholexicology is thus based on a "procedural semantics" in which the essential steps correspond to the routines used to programme the operations of a computer.

Unfortunately, what never emerges very clearly from *Perception and Language* is how the psycho-lexicologist determines what the meaning of any given word actually is. Explicating lexical knowledge somehow gets lost in the welter of computational procedures involved in a general problem-solving exercise. But is everything that a speaker has stored in his memory about some item (e.g. gold) part of the meaning of the corresponding word in his vocabulary (*gold, or, aurum,* etc.)? If so, the speaker's lexical knowledge is effectively coextensive with his knowledge about the item. If not, then some criterion must be proposed for distinguishing what counts as the meaning of the word from what does not.

AT PRESENT, whether their sympathies are Austinian or Tarskian, the psychologists seem to be in no better position than the philosophers or the theoretical linguists to deal convincingly with this crucial problem of descriptive semantics. It is, of course, the old lexicographer's problem of definition in a new guise. But it is a problem which any contemporary science which claims to be concerned with how thoughts are expressed in words must sooner or later face up to. If it is a genuine problem, a solution is needed. If it is a false problem, we need to know why. If it is a genuine problem and there is no solution, we shall have to accept that Port Royal's second province will never be properly governed—in other words, that a scientific semantics is impossible.

[19] *Perception and Language*. By G. A. MILLER and P. N. JOHNSON-LAIRD. Cambridge University Press, £12.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ways of Looking

Religion, Philosophy & the Future—By NINIAN SMART

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION ought to be a central part of philosophy; but often it is peripheral. Part of the reason lies in the way religion tends now to be cocooned in a ghetto. It is (according to taste) a private affair, an irrelevance, to do with faith not knowledge, or too powerful to be affected by philosophical argument. Such thoughts stem from a variety of causes, among which is a linguistic fact overlaying an unfortunate conceptual map. This has to do with the way "religion" itself is used, as I shall explain shortly. Another cause is the uncertain attitude of many English-speaking philosophers towards metaphysical worldviews such as those of Aquinas or Schopenhauer or Sartre which in part express strong practical and affective stances towards life. Philosophy has become technical, tending to the higher order and thus to comment about comments rather than to comment. In hand with these causes there has entrenched itself a professional categorisation which often frowns upon those who step on other folks' territory. Yet in a number of ways we have reached a turning point. I shall try to illustrate how by reference to a number of recent books in the field of philosophy, religion and ethics. And I offer the following claims as a framework for discussion.

1. In so far as philosophy is about life it should be serious regarding religions and ideologies;
2. The time for reappraisal of the force of traditional religions has arrived;
3. Philosophy needs an anthropology.

Perhaps I can begin to comment on these theses by clarifying the manner in which the common conceptual map which draws a boundary around "religion" and "religions" is a strange projection.

If one looks at most influential writings in the philosophy of religion in the last two or three decades—and their dominant flavour can be tasted from a symposium held in Lancaster University in 1975 and now published[1]—one finds that religion is thought of predominantly in terms of Western theism (and atheism), and very often in terms not of religion in actuality but as expressing some claims about God and the universe. The God of the philosophers is dissected, defended, destroyed; or he changes shape to become the God of the language-game, cocooned therein, without intelligible external relations to other ways of viewing the world.

I use this locution "ways of looking at the world" precisely because of the force and limitation of the term "religion." There is already an awkwardness when we turn to atheism. Is a passionate atheism not a sort of religion, and yet is there not some sense in which the atheism wishes to reject religion? Likewise, it would appear that Marxism (which contains a cosmology, a doctrine of man, an ethic and an emotional appeal, has some religious properties, and certainly tends to regard itself as a rival to traditional religions and their partial offshoots such as philosophical idealism) should be classified with religions even if it is not strictly speaking a religion. Is it not then artificial to have something called "the philosophy of religion" which is confined in the main to religion and religions? Should we not have as our terms of reference both religions and other ideologies (used in a broad sense)? The Germans have *Weltanschauung*. Our "worldview" is rather pale in comparison. Moreover it does not bring out sufficiently the practical and emotional dimensions of a religion or ideology. But I shall use the term. In principle, the philosophy of religion should expand into being the philosophy of worldviews. But it so happens that the exploration of traditional religions can throw much illumination upon secular worldviews, which often conceal their passion in facticity; and can benefit from an approach out of the exploration of religious phenomena. I can explain in relation to the problem of *myth*.

TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES and religions express much, of course, through myths—stories of the sacred. The definition and analysis of myth is a rich and disputed field, resounding with such famous names as Mircea Eliade, Carl Jung, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Geoffrey Kirk, Joseph Campbell. We grope towards a grammar of myth. But myths keep crumbling somewhat beneath our gaze, as though, unmasked by analysis, they lose their power—psychic emperors who have lost

[1] *Reason and Religion*. Edited by STUART C. BROWN. Cornell University Press, $15.00, £11.25, paper $6.95, £4.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their clothes. And for many folk today it seems nothing is sacred and the gods, even God himself, have become curiosities. Let scholars wrestle with myths; men have more important worries. But the fact is that stories and symbols retain their power, but in a new key.

Consider: would it not be strange if mythic thinking and traditional symbolism were to lose their power, so long and pervasive in human history, without causing some profound transformation of human consciousness? Let me approach this question via some issues arising in modern Christianity, which can be illustrated somewhat from the recent *The Myth of God Incarnate*,[2] which has stirred the bourgeoisie sufficiently to elicit a rapid evangelical reply, *The Truth of God Incarnate*.[3] Both touch important nerves of thinking about Christianity, but are rather shallow. The response, for me, illustrates a motto: "When in doubt, go back two centuries." *The Myth of God Incarnate* is confusing and jejune over the issues it centrally hopes to deal with. As the preface says (p. ix):

> The writers of this book are convinced that another major theological development is called for in this last part of the twentieth century. The need arises from growing knowledge of Christian origins, and involves a recognition that Jesus was (as he is presented in Acts 2.21) "a man approved by God" for a special role within the divine purpose, and that the later conception of him as God incarnate, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity living a human life, is a mythological or poetical way of expressing his significance for us. This recognition is called for in the interests of truth: but it also has increasingly important practical implications for our relationship to the peoples of the other great world religions.

Now certainly Christianity, as any other reasonably successful movement, needs reformulation in changing social, historical and scientific circumstances. And certainly it needs to think through its relationship to other world faiths. But the crux in the above passage lies in the use of "mythological or poetical." When one turns to the crucial essay on myth in theology by Professor Maurice Wiles it is a touch disappointing that he confines himself virtually exclusively to the understandings of myth found in Christian theological writings, as though theology is a determinate specialism. The major figures of mythological analysis whom I referred to above are absent from the parade.

However, Wiles does make two points which need deeper exploration. He notes first that a myth can have an historical component (if we

[2] *The Myth of God Incarnate*. Edited by JOHN HICK. SCM Press, £2.95.
[3] *The Truth of God Incarnate*. Edited by MICHAEL GREEN. Hodder & Stoughton, 80p.

Psychotherapy: A Personal Approach

D. J. SMAIL

A stimulating and original review of the contemporary scene in psychotherapy in which D. J. Smail challenges many of the conventional approaches to the discipline, placing his own particular emphasis on the actual experience and personal relationship of patient and practitioner. The discussion voices important questions which are being taken increasingly seriously by those working in this area, and will be of considerable interest to layman and professional alike. £5.95

Now available in paperback

Perceiving Women

SHIRLEY ARDENER

'an outstandingly original and sane contribution . . . demonstrates the power of anthropological method to illuminate universal problems of human relationships.' *Royal Anthropological Institute Newsletter*

'an important step towards establishing a social anthropology of women . . . fascinating reading.' *New Society*

'required reading for anyone interested in the anthropology of symbolism or the analysis of ideology . . . highly recommended' *Choice*

£6.95 £2.95 paperback

DENT

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stuck to "sacred story" the confusions of some notable theologians such as Wolfhart Pannenberg would be avoided). History is a flow of human and man-related events described by narratives; sacred stories can obviously, as narratives, refer to items in that flow. Second, he considers that a myth if it is to be worth retaining should through its structure refer to some ontological truth. Thus the myth of creation expresses the dependence of the cosmos and men upon God. But one asks then why the "poetry" of the myth should be retained, if the point can thus be expressed metaphysically? And what happens when we discard parts of the myth?

On the latter point Peter Geach, whose mixture of conservative belief and conceptual acumen leads him to straight talking (and some oddities), remarks, in his *Providence and Evil*[4] (p. 88), "if the doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin are rejected, then this involves such a sceptical attitude towards Christianity that we can have no possible reason to be Christians." But the Adam story's plausibility has faded for many modern Christians. This means that the myth of salvation needs to be reconstructed. In this as in other respects Christianity is liable to undergo deep transformation.

THE SACRED STORY is a typical element in a religious worldview which has emotional and behavioural significance. One reason for retaining the mythic or poetic way of expressing belief is that emotion and behaviour flow from the belief. Thus the metaphysical doctrine of the dependence of the world on God is something which should have existential impact upon the individual contemplating it.

Poetry is not the only way of conveying existential significance. The Marxist account of history has suggestive force about action and about our situation in the struggle for a better world. It seems to me therefore that Christian belief does not so much need scepticism about the incarnation of Christ as a modern account of evolution and history as indicative of God's action, and of spiritual resistances to it. In other words the psychological and orienting functions of the sacred story of the fall, redemption and second coming would be more plausibly expressed in a theory of history—a spiritual rather than a materialist dialectic. Shades, no doubt, of Hegel and Ernst Troeltsch: and at the heart of the history Jesus would appear as a nodal figure on the planet. A theory of history need not be at odds with historical method, any more than Weber's use of typology is anti-historical. But such a new planetary sacred story requires the ontology behind it—the will of God, for instance, must refer to some hidden reality. Thus as myths in their primal form fade there is a necessity for stronger doctrine. Doctrines are brought in to redress the balance as the weight of myth shifts to poetry.

Yet positivism and analytic philosophy—indeed the temper of much of the philosophy of the three decades since World War II—have rather frowned upon the construction of worldviews. The anti-metaphysical mood has privatised belief, and subtracted often from it its doctrinal force. It has privatised belief in that the weight of "truth" is shifted not to outer evidences, proofs, and so on, but to a person's faith, hope, love. The content of belief becomes a picture, or series of pictures, which connects with and guides feelings and attitudes. These have been major themes in the writings of post-Wittgenstein philosophers of religion, such as Norman Malcolm, Peter Winch and D. Z. Phillips (who figure prominently in the Lancaster symposium referred to above). Religion is accounted for in the famous but ambivalent Wittgenstein idea of language-games. This has been subjected to judicious scrutiny recently by Patrick Sherry,[5] who among other things is critical of the tendency among such writers (and in Wittgenstein himself) to neglect the historical evolution of religious concepts and its relation to changes both in knowledge and spirituality. Indeed in many respects the Wittgensteinian approach to religion has been destructive. It has scarcely encouraged a basis in historical and comparative enquiries for reflection about worldviews; it has often, through excessive reliance on Wittgenstein, given authority to idiosyncratic and sometimes false claims on his part about the nature of religion. Its good side is a stress on the existential outreach of belief, which when delineated soberly can be helpful. Thus Stewart Sutherland has used something of the Wittgensteinian approach in a book-length discussion of books V and VI of *The Brothers Karamazov*.[6] He considers Ivan's existential atheism and the oblique response of Father Zossima in "A Russian Monk." The obliqueness seems to stem from two related causes—that a form of life is

[4] *Providence and Evil*. By P. T. GEACH. Cambridge University Press, £4.50. One oddity (p. 79–80) is this: "One virtue, if I am right, that God cannot share with his creatures is the virtue of sympathy with physical suffering. It is virtuous that a man should in measure sympathize with the sufferings of the lower animals: only, in measure, for someone who tried to sympathize with a shark or octopus or herring would be erring by excess as Dr. Moreau erred by defect. . . ."

[5] *Religion, Truth and Language-Games*. By P. J. SHERRY. Macmillan Press, £8.25.

[6] *Atheism and the Rejection of God: Contemporary Philosophical and the Brothers Karamazov*. By STEWART R. SUTHERLAND. Basil Blackwell, £6.75.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

informed by a picture or pictures, and that it engages with feelings. Dostoevsky thus presents an alternative picture through Zossima and a profoundly different mood from that of Ivan.

The question is: how can the descriptive aspect of a worldview, or of a doctrine or myth which is a component thereof, evoke feeling and action?

This indicates how there are two directions, an upwards and a downwards direction, in which reductionism about religion can occur. A Wittgensteinian disease is the downward reduction—religious truth is internal to regulative pictures, and dissolves into attitudes. A metaphysician's disease can be the upward reduction: a worldview makes claims but loses its purchase on feeling and action.

THE ANALYSIS OF WORLDVIEWS, religious and secular, leads to an important conclusion, which is somewhat Popperian. Though we can begin to sketch out criteria which are relevant to the plausibility of one worldview as compared with another, it is clear that proof of a system is not possible. Indeed the very certitude with which a worldview is maintained by its more fanatical adherents is itself a symptom of uncertainty. Thus a conclusion the philosopher may suitably come to is that allowance must be made for pluralism, and since in this case pluralism involves divergence of responses, of feeling and practice, the philosophy of worldviews points to a tolerant society. In so far as a worldview rejects such toleration it is philosophically, and one would say humanly, mistaken. There is as it were a higher level criterion of the truth of a worldview—its ability to accept the existence, within the society it defines or helps to constitute, of other religions and ideologies—and this corresponds to the congruence between libertarianism and the epistemology of science.

Moreover, and here we revert to a lesson from Patrick Sherry's critique of Wittgenstein, since religious forms of life change and since spiritual developments can learn by example, religious worldviews are liable to become, in the plural context, eclectic. Christians look to yoga and the Buddha as well as to Saint Teresa and the Beatitudes. More generally, a planetary culture is beginning to form itself, and many good and bad influences cross the multiple cultural frontiers.

Now this can lead to a kind of cultural consumerism of a rather unpleasant and superficial character; but it also provides a setting for individualism. An eloquent and persuasive expression of this is that of David Norton[7] who

[7] *Personal Destinies: A Philosophy of Ethical Individualism.* By DAVID NORTON. Princeton University Press, $22.50, £15.15; paper $4.95, £3.35.

Midwives and Medical Men

A history of inter-professional rivalries and women's rights

Jean Donnison

". . . . scholarly and meticulously researched . . . the story told is fascinating not least because the struggles and disputes Dr. Donnison so admirably relates reverberate today through our contemporary controversies." *Times Literary Supplement* **£6.50**

Varieties of Unbelief

Atheists and Agnostics in English Society 1850–1960

Susan Budd

". . . . a major contribution to our understanding of the varieties of unbelief which have flourished and otherwise during the past century." *Times Higher Education Supplement* **£9.50**

The Fragmentary Class Structure

K. Roberts, F. G. Cook, S. L. Clark, E. Semeonoff

". . . . clear, sensible and judicious . . . it is good to have such an interesting study of an under-researched area." *Times Literary Supplement* **£5.50, £2.75** paperback

Heinemann Educational Books
48 Charles Street,
London W1X 8AH

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

argues for an ethic of individual self-fulfilment, and *en passant* manages a perceptive critique of John Rawls' celebrated theory of justice. But such an ethic does, like other value-stances, imply a view of human nature, an anthropology; and it may be too that a tolerant society has to harbour within it forms of collective living which set small store by individualism.

IF A WORLDVIEW HAS a double aspect—its descriptive claims and its existential force—then traditional religious worldviews are in the West favoured by circumstances in the late '70s. Philosophical positivism wanes, and the coherence of religion's descriptive claims can be competently defended against some recently fashionable critiques, as Richard Swinburne has well argued.[8] And on the affective side, a new romanticism has been widely stimulated by Western encounter with Eastern and other non-Western forms of spirituality. Since traditional religions incorporate a great deal of experience, a deep appraisal of their claims about men's inner life is important in forming a developed theory of human nature.

Earlier I suggested that a modern formulation of Christian belief ought to include a perspective upon planetary history; but a secular version of this would in any event be necessary to an appraisal of the contribution of various cultures to our new plural civilisation, and thereby to an understanding of man. Here, if I may, I shall outline a theory and a programme of exploration which may provide the new direction for the philosophy of religion, or rather (as I have called it) the philosophy of worldviews.

Here perhaps a starting point can be made by looking at a couple of recent attempts at philosophical anthropology. Martin Hollis[9] is concerned with a contrast between what he calls Plastic Man and Autonomous Man—roughly between man as locus of an intersection of causal laws and man as possessing a rational subject self. Briefly, Hollis argues that fully rational action is its own explanation, given the social and natural context and the actor's identity, itself a hybrid of his private and social self. When rational explanation runs out, then causal explanation comes in. Hollis here presents a more complex and socially sophisticated version of the older distinction between reasons and causes. In a not altogether dissimilar vein Raziel Abelson[10] has treated personhood as, in effect, precipitated in the individual by society. The person is seen as the free, rational author of actions; and is not reducible to a congeries of biological and physical processes.

The flavour of these accounts is, I suspect, overrationalist, and in one respect insufficiently dynamic. For the mental world of men has in it more than rules, beliefs and so forth: it contains imaginative objects, the foci of belief and other phenomena, which partly autonomously affect the individual. One task in phenomenology is to depict such constellations: for instance the gods and thought-world of (say) a typical Sinhalese farmer from up-country Sri Lanka. Teilhard de Chardin coined the term noosphere, and whatever may be thought of his worldview, the coinage has a convenience—though perhaps psychosphere might be more appropriate. It has an analogy to Popper's "World 3." Abelson's anthropology is less sociologically oriented than Hollis's. But he argues that psychology is not and cannot be a strict natural science, because human beings' actions cannot be described and explained without recourse to avowals based on self-knowledge. The authority of such avowals is, so to say, precipitated in individuals by society. Certain consequences flow from such a social concept of the person—among other things, according to Abelson, the incoherencey of determinism.

The anthropology which emerges, and to which the philosophy of worldviews is in its own way relevant, is as follows. Men's rational and imaginative life, though it has its basis in physical and biological facts, is an emergent characteristic, i.e. it cannot be predicted from or conversely reduced to, a set of such physical and biological facts. Moreover, the items to which men have mental access to in the psychosphere cannot be arranged according to a deterministic rubric. This is one reason why history, including the history of ideas, religion, the arts and so on, contains patterns, not regularities. The contents of the mental world need to be understood prior to explanation of human behaviour; and part of this world is comprised under worldviews; the philosophy of worldviews, which among other things might hope to delineate the relationship between worldviews and human feelings and actions, would be an element in the understanding of history. And, to revert to an earlier theme, the exploration of religion and religions in the course of this enterprise might usefully, in reappraising the force of traditional religions, attempt to map the grammar of symbolism and ritual action and their secular analogues. This enterprise is already being partially undertaken in the work of such historians of religion as Mircea Eliade.

Though such a grammar of the symbols and ideas that form components of worldviews is explicitly eschewed in the more modest and

---

[8] *The Coherence of Theism*. By R. G. SWINBURNE. Oxford University Press, £9.00.

[9] *Models of Man*. By MARTIN HOLLIS. Cambridge University Press. £7.00.

[10] *Persons*. By RAZIEL ABELSON. Macmillan, £8.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

formal, though nevertheless impressive and wide-ranging, work of David Martin,[11] it nevertheless is important if a fully rounded approach to religious history is to have general elements.

I HAVE BEEN TREATING the philosophy of religion or worldviews, and philosophy generally, as a higher order activity. But even here one must also recognise first-order biases which stem from and help to express a worldview. It is no surprise that a mixture of logical positivism and analysis in the period after World War II had a "no-nonsense" attitude to the work of existentialists and others of a metaphysical bent who could be suspected of presenting worldviews less astringent than the liberal rationalism in vogue among so many English-speaking intellectuals. Philosophy does, of course, tend to varieties of rationalism, since "reason" stands for consistency and consequence. Yet if my general position is correct, worldviews (even those placing reason in a central place) are fuelled and shaped by passion, or if not by passion, by models of the world and life with strong value suggestions. This is well brought out by Stuart Hampshire, in his Thank-offering to Britain Fund lectures of 1976, dealing with the moral views of Aristotle and Spinoza.[12] An ethical theory is not autonomous, without an anthropology and a cosmology—and this view is vigorously propounded, in relation to the virtues, by Peter Geach.[13] Incidentally, he uses the emergent nature of the human mental world as an argument of the creation of souls by God. Thus

> We may, however, properly speak of a special Divine intervention as being involved every time a new human life comes to be; this is the insight of the creationist view that we need to preserve. For the modes of description needed for human intellectual activities, language, and institutions are *logically* different from those that will serve to describe the facts and laws of sub-human nature.

Naturally, however, there are alternative interpretations of such emergence, for worldviews do not admit of proof. Another example of the effect of an anthropology on ethics is in the unduly neglected anarchism of Godwin, which has been reconstructed most admirably by John P. Clark[14] —but he exhibits a tension in libertarianism, which, by having rationalist roots, tends to underestimate the symbolic aspects of human attitudes.

[11] *A Theory of Secularization*. By DAVID MARTIN. Basil Blackwell, £10 (publication late spring).
[12] *Two Theories of Morality*. By STUART HAMPSHIRE. Oxford University Press, £3.00.
[13] *The Virtues*. By P. T. GEACH. Cambridge University Press, £4.95.
[14] *The Philosophical Anarchism of William Godwin*. By JOHN P. CLARK. Princeton University Press, $16.50, £11.20.

IN PURSUIT OF COLERIDGE

Kathleen Coburn

'Unusually rich in sympathy and insight... It has been Kathleen Coburn's own distinction to have seen from the beginning the quality of what he [Coleridge] had to offer and not to have let go in her determination to make it more available to others.' *John Beer, TLS*

'The candour and approachableness of her discussions ... is matched by her warmth in describing the daily events of a life ruled by an over-riding passion ... What an enviable life and what a roster of achievement for a colonial woman fallen among English greybeards.'
£4.50 *Brian Alderson, The Times*

KING OF THE CASTLE

Choice and Responsibility in the Modern World

Gai Eaton

This distinguished book is a lucid and elegant plea for the restoration of the religious dimension to man's view of the universe. The author writes primarily as a Muslim, but draws on many aspects of the traditional wisdom, or perennial philosophy, of which Islam is one expression.

Published jointly with the Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy. £5.00

BODLEY HEAD

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

His optimism about the possibility of a good society in part rests on his view that many undesirable personal qualities have their origin in a feeling of a need for superiority in material possessions. But he overlooks the complexity of human strivings for self-esteem. A desideratum in a new phenomenology is a realistic account of these strivings, which owe something to the grammar of symbols and ideas that enter into worldviews.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION has, in a way rightly, come to a passage of time in which there is concern to analyse and evaluate religion in Wittgensteinian terms. But this should be realistic, both to religions as they exist and to the broader field of worldviews, including political ideologies. Worldviews change and so myth comes to be reinterpreted as poetry, etc.; but doctrine and the interpretation of history can be ways of conserving the force of the myth in a new secular context. And a system such as Marxism, though presenting itself as scientific and unmythological, yet has an emotional and practical force which distinguishes it from a "flat" scientific theory. The analysis of worldviews needs to show the bridge between the descriptive aspect of a belief system and its existential aspect, and part of the task is to exhibit the grammar of human symbolism—to this the history of religions is obviously relevant. Such a symbolic grammar is of interest to philosophical anthropology, since it would delineate part of the "psychosphere" in which human beings intellectually and emotionally participate; and would also be a counterweight to the tendency to rationalism among philosophers.

The philosophy of religion, expanded into what I have called the philosophy of worldviews, has a more crucial role in general philosophy than often appears. Informed by history of religions, it can contribute to a philosophical anthropology which does justice to the symbolic life of man, even in a secular age.

Freudians & Laingians

The Naturalisation of False Consciousness—By NEIL WARREN

ALL SCIENTIFIC THEORIES of human experience and action are liable to be theories of false consciousness, whether or not they advertise the fact. Taking man as object of knowledge, these accounts have it that he is other than as subject he experiences himself to be. They are explanations of the other, behind his back. Reason, will, character, sensibility and the human spirit are transformed into cause, motive, ideology, response and personality; and the change, if one of language, is much more than lexical. Radical behaviourists have tried to dump consciousness altogether—cheating on their pledge, however, when studying their own species. But because people know with Cartesian certainty that they are conscious, behaviourism has only a narrow appeal as an academic posture. It is rather the *special* theories of false consciousness which keep coming back like a song in 20th-century Western culture. There were other good candidates—Nietzsche, Pareto—but it is Marx and Freud who have long presided. Both address themselves, unlike behaviourism, to the actual contents of consciousness, but look elsewhere for the true causes of these false contents. Both "naturalised" existing philosophical notions by stipulating their objective substance in the reality of mind and society; both seem to offer a fighting chance of at least partial overthrow of false consciousness. Their joint presidency has provoked attempts to fuse them into a single theoretical scheme. Even Freud, I learn from Marie Jahoda, once endorsed the materialist account of ideology while insisting it is not the whole story.

Of the two versions, Freud's looks to be the younger. Freud's first "Freudian" work was published in 1900. Freud's earlier work contained anticipations of Freudianism; but so did the writings of many others—Carus, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Herbart, Hartmann, Fechner and Janet, and so on. L. L. Whyte was surely correct, as evidenced by Ellenberger's more exhaustive scholarship, in holding that Freudian ideas were a European commonplace in the second half of the last century. Marie Jahoda's introduction to Freud's thought, *Freud and the Dilemmas of Psychology*,[1] is the first to discuss these earlier inputs to Freudianism: she points out that there were clear predecessors to virtually all Freud's ideas, but that somehow it was Freud who uniquely aroused hostility and adulation—and of

[1] *Freud and the Dilemmas of Psychology*. By MARIE JAHODA. The Hogarth Press with the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, £2.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

course attained the special eponymic status. Marxism and Freudianism, then, on a revised view, were more or less contemporaneous versions of the same movement of thought: man had become ready to hear that his was an alien being.

Interest in Freud and Freudianism is as strong as ever, and is stimulated further by *From Oedipus to Moses*, Marthe Robert's beautifully measured, daring, and successful study of Freud's identity[2] and by Professor Jahoda's most readable exposition. Even the hostile critics, the Medawars, Skinners, and Poppers, keep interest in Freud alive, as Jahoda points out: "Why cannot scholars, who to their own satisfaction 'proved' decades ago that 'what was new in Freud was not true, and what was true was not new', let go of the attack?" She alludes, I believe, to Eysenck quoting Ebbinghaus—the two more than half a century apart. She also may reflect that Catch 22 of psychoanalytic suspicion: that strong resistance to an idea proves its truth. In any case, Freudians have no need of outside enemies; the whole movement has from the start been characterised by bitter schism and apostasy.

There are still plenty who seem prepared to embrace some version of Freudianism as the truth, though they do not often tell us how they know. Psychoanalysts are not short of patients, despite cogent suggestions that their therapy does not work well. I have seemed to detect a recent quickening of interest even within the universities. To be sure, it is hardly noticeable among academic psychologists; and Professor Jahoda has set herself to put that right. Her book is aimed at psychologists, though others will profit from it. Its contention is that Freud is a fine goad to a crisis-torn psychology struggling to clarify issues to which he also speaks.

THE EXISTENCE OF A STREAM of obituaries of a thriving Freudianism is very odd; but it is also odd that Freudianism has survived so long. The scientific process is not usually like that: a theory of such detail should be discarded, superseded, or modified beyond recognition by now. We should have Freud and Freudianism in their historical place, and as Jahoda says, that remains unsettled. Psychoanalysis may not be scientific at all—the case is argued often enough. But what then is it? Could it be not science but properly something else? I am claiming neutral status here, and risk displeasing everyone in a debate which has no neutrals. It still seems to require a certain commitment, perhaps a gut experience of proof-by-cogency, to join one or other group of disciples or interpreters of Freud. Obviously, there are plenty who can make the commitment; but the problem of turning gut certainty into widely shareable knowledge remains unsolved. Freud's has without doubt been the most generally influential psychological theory ever put forward; it can also be readily dismissed by any second-year undergraduate student of psychology, simply by the application of ordinary received canons of scientific theory-evaluation. Freud or the canons must be wrong, one would think; but they also may not be made for one another.

Freud wrote beautifully. All the same, learning Freudianism from Freud is not easy. For one thing the complete *oeuvre* is vast. For another, he continuously developed and modified his ideas: there can be no single orthodox version, and different "readings" of Freud are perfectly legitimate. The peculiarly scholastic considerations of orthodoxy which have plagued the psychoanalytic movement would be pointless had not Freudian ideas been so wantonly transformed by others who invoked his name, starting with the immediate disciples. Good secondary expositions are therefore valuable. Marie Jahoda might be the first to say that she cannot match Freud's literary style; but her book is admirably clear and flowing, and eschews his sometimes tortuous orchestration of arguments, qualifications and counter-arguments. Admittedly selective, her account manages to display the contradictions within Freud's theories; in particular the double language of meaning and mechanism, which eventually she presents as a virtue and a challenge to psychology. Freud, after all, naturalised man by incorporating the subject-object dichotomy within him: man is subject (I, ego, consciousness, praxis) but he is also object (it, id, unconscious, process). The objective tail wags the subjective dog with relentless determination into false consciousness.

JAHODA MAKES LITTLE of the newly influential French re-readings of Freud by Jacques Lacan and Paul Ricoeur. Lacan's style of presentation is among the vilest imaginable, and in previous attempts to read him I have been defeated by the perversity of his language. This latest title promised well: *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*.[3] Its blurb states: "there is no clearer statement of the ideas and issues which have aroused such passionate reactions in France." There was also the additional assurance of Anika Lemaire's introduction to Lacan's thought.[4] Were it not for the reviewer's duty,

[2] *From Oedipus to Moses: Freud's Jewish Identity*. By MARTHE ROBERT. Translated by RALPH MANHEIM. Routledge, £5.00.

[3] *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. By JACQUES LACAN. Edited by JACQUES-ALAIN MILLER. Translated by ALAN SHERIDAN. The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, £8.50.

[4] *Jacques Lacan*. By ANIKA LEMAIRE. Translated by DAVID MACEY. Routledge, £7.25, $16.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

however, I could not have read either volume through to the end. Whether my duty has done me good is another matter.

Now in old age, Lacan is a practising psychoanalyst who has broken with the official French psychoanalytic organisation and has been banned from training analysts, as he is quick to remind us, by the official international body. For 25 years, however, he has held weekly seminars in Paris which are said to have influenced many French intellectuals. This volume is a transcript of one year's seminars, 1964–5. The remainder are to be published in the same way: the Lacanian *oeuvre* will eventually be as vast as Freud's. The "seminars" are actually rambling lectures, with the odd question and answer at the end of some. Lacan contributes a preface, as also for Lemaire, but seems to have had no hand in editing the lectures. What we read, therefore, is speech, not writing. Nor is it the "written" speech of scholarly lectures: even Lemaire calls Lacan's language "wilfully mysterious." There is something unique to Lacan's style. It is not the language of mysticism; it is something very different. I was often powerfully reminded both of textbook schizophrenic language and of the later James Joyce (Lacan now says that Joyce preoccupies him greatly). The volume is none the less published by the (British) Institute of Psycho-Analysis in the International Psycho-Analytical Library.

Lacan claims to give back to speech its dignity, and to language its true role in the unconscious. He is something of a Marxist, ensuring the double falsity of consciousness. His originality, however, says Lemaire, "consists in having placed the Freudian theory of the unconscious on the order of the day": he is a structuralist, drawing explicitly on Saussure, and this involves him in some phoney algebra. For Lacan the unconscious is structured like a language and the condition of this structuring is actual language. For revisionism less than this (and there is more) Freud had heretics expelled. Lacan, however, breathtakingly presents his thought as a return to the true teaching of Freud, with biting scorn for the revisionism of everyone else. In so far as Freud is recognisable in Lacan, it seems to be the early Freud with little of the biologising. At any rate, Freud's status is preserved inviolate, and Lacan is the one true Freudian. It gets worse: "Was Freud really the first", asks Lacan, "and did he remain the only theoretician of this supposed science to have introduced fundamental concepts? Were this so, it would be very unusual in the history of the sciences." Yes, it would, I gasp, weak from paradox and perversity.

Saussure's analysis of language offers a profoundly original view of man which as Saussure clearly saw is not confined to language alone. The structuralist analysis of content as relations will apply to any system of signs and meanings. Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss have seized this possibility; and the exciting prospect of a structuralist psychology and social psychology can be glimpsed. Lacan evokes this vision; and that may be his importance. As a communicator, he fails, even with his own disciples, such as Laplanche, whom he rejects. Anika Lemaire's exposition, being writing rather than speech, does better but does not succeed. Ungracious to the end, Lacan appears actually to say that she fails, for reasons which are the reverse of mine: her "academic discourse" cannot capture his speech-thought. Lemaire chose to avoid paraphrase, whereas the rest of us need a clarification in simple language.

IN JUDGING LACAN, I am obviously unsure in distinguishing failures of communication from inadequacy of thought. There is not much content, possibly as befits structuralism. No evidence or concrete illustration is given, not even case studies. All is stipulation and evocation. Stripped of their verbiage, most of the Lacanian insistences seem to be suggestive notions that have occurred to and even plagued many scholars and writers. Language reorganises experience and thus creates a distance of symbolisation between man and the raw givens of the world. Language conditions relations between persons so as to allow the concept of self as an individuality, transcending the "mirror" stage in which self and other are merged. The self is permanently split into subject (of speech) and object (of the symbolic order)—there it is again. In the gap of the I-me split lurks the unconscious. Following Jakobson's lead, Lacan speaks of the symbolic unconscious as constituted and operated by *metaphor* (=condensation) and *metonymy* (=displacement). I have looked in vain, however, for Lacan's equivalents of the Freudian *functions* of these defences and of the other Freudian defence mechanisms. If, beyond my comprehension, he has worked out the implications of these notions, his is an important achievement. If not, and anyway, their haunting suggestiveness may be the basis of his appeal to some. For these are among the current mysteries of our being. Lacan is at times strongly reminiscent of certain modern theologies which locate God in man's experience, in the incompleteness of and the otherness within self-experience. Schleiermacher's concept of God and Lacan's conception of the unconscious are structurally similar.

APART FROM FREUD, Lacan refers to philosophers (Aristotle, Plato, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Merleau-Ponty) far more often than to

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

psychoanalysts. It is striking how concerned psychoanalysts are with philosophy, and philosophers with Freudianism. *Freud and Philosophy*, Paul Ricoeur's brilliant re-reading of Freud as hermeneutics, is now re-issued in paperback translation.[5] Lacan in fact refers to Ricoeur (this in 1964–5; we provincials are well behind the Parisian times) in typically condescending manner. Ricoeur is commended for having gone a long way, for a philosopher, to reach the reality of the unconscious. Then, "a lot of fuss is made nowadays of what is called hermeneutics"; and Lacan summarily dismisses Ricoeur for treating what analysts deal with as "pure contingency." For Lacan, the unconscious is as real and certain as is God to mystics.

Ricoeur's *magna quaestio* is also to do with language, including both psychoanalysis and religious symbolism. He is apologetic—unnecessarily so—for neither being an analyst nor having been analysed. He limits himself to a sympathetic reading of Freud, including the inconsistent elements arising from Freud's revisions. His call is not *"Back to Freud!"*, however: rather, for debate on the texture of Freudian discourse he reasonably chooses Freud's version of Freudianism. Ricoeur gives us very much what we have come to expect from the best French savants: careful and profound ratiocination in the development of a systematic argument on ambitious and difficult topics.

His explicit aim is to put Freud in his place. A former neurologist and physiologist, Freud considered his approach to be positive empirical science: "Psychoanalysis is a natural science—what else could it be?" A hermeneutic, says Ricoeur: an explicitly interpretative rather than observational discipline. Thus it is not *science* at all, as the term is usually used in English and as used by the latter-day positivist critics of the self-styled positivist Freud. Ricoeur the phenomenologist of religion appears to enjoy his association with these critics, even Skinner. He of course differs from them in holding that Freudianism is not science (not their kind, anyway) because it is *something else*. That something else is a set of principles for interpreting meanings and double meanings which are hidden, sometimes from their author. Man is a text, and by Freud's theory of false consciousness, we are all mutilated texts or palimpsests.

The outcome is that Ricoeur not only stands Freud on his head, he wishes to invert the whole movement of thought by going back to its beginning and standing Hegel on his feet. To take Freud

[5] *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation.* By PAUL RICOEUR. Translated by DENIS SAVAGE. Yale University Press, $22.50, £16.30; paper $6.95, £5.00.

Ethics, Value and Reality

Selected Philosophical Papers of Aurel Kolnai

introduced by
BERNARD WILLIAMS
& DAVID WIGGINS

Though rooted in the phenomenology of Husserl, Kolnai had a profound sympathy for such English philosophers as W. D. Ross, G. E. Moore and J. L. Austin. Ten papers have been chosen (two previously unpublished) as representative of his best work in ethics and in related areas of social philosophy and aesthetics. £9.00

The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham

A Comment on the Commentaries & A Fragment on Government

edited by
J. H. BURNS
& H. L. A. HART

These two of Bentham's works, of great importance for an understanding of his thought and of the development of English legal theory, are here presented in a single volume in newly established texts with full annotation and indexing. £30.00

The Athlone Press
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

first, the "vicissitudes of instincts" are to be attained only in the vicissitudes of meaning—the semantics of desire. The Freudian topographies of mind and their supportive energy-economy explained meaning and experience, for Freud. Lacan, the one true Freudian, has quietly dropped most of Freud's structure and dynamics, perhaps wisely, and what remains is constituted by the meaning-relation. Ricoeur retains the whole orthodox Freudian works but holds them attainable only through meanings and double meanings. The hermeneutic is prior, but Ricoeur clearly maintains the mixed discourse of meaning and mechanism which Jahoda sees as a virtue in Freud and a challenge to academic psychology.

Marx inverted Hegel, from idealist philosophy to Scientific History: the first transmutation of ideas from *Geist* to *Natur*. Freud did similarly: Thomas Mann, for instance, found Freud's ideas so familiar that (with Schopenhauer in mind) he described them as translated from metaphysics into psychology. Ricoeur now, as his argument progresses, inverts Freudianism back into the Hegelian dialectic. There are problems with this, as with his treatment of the instinctual energy-economy, that I shall not take space for here,[6] bearing in mind that Ricoeur's study has been available in translation for eight years.

ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT for me in returning to Ricoeur is that he seeks, like Philip Rieff, to understand our modern Western culture, no less, and so he takes its hero Freud as "a text in which our culture is expressed and understood." In reading the books for this review, I increasingly feel that I am surveying not only the fortunes and variations of a certain theory of human nature but also a key element of the cultural and intellectual history of the 20th century. If the world had not come to Freud, these authors, and I, would not be writing about him now. Freudianism is an interpretation of man and of culture; but even as such it is itself culture, and the full social phenomenon includes an audience, a public, as documented by Serge Moscovici[7] for the French. Some representation of the Freudian account "feels right" to many: Moscovici's findings suggest that the French public, like Lacan and unlike Ricoeur, include little of the biological backdrop to the theory. If we can understand how Freud came to preside (as Rieff puts it), we should be able to put him finally in his place, and it may yet be on Olympus. This will involve understanding what Freudianism really is, and I believe Ricoeur offers more along these lines than the most impeccable scientific scorn. The positivist critics are holding the line for a certain kind of scientific empiricism, inappropriate in this instance. Their sober rationality should not preclude us from viewing them as the extremist fringe in this debate.

New books by Roy Schafer[8] and by Jerome Neu,[9] careful but less ambitious than our Frenchmen, are probably signs of the same times. Both are psychoanalysts doing philosophy in the service of Freudianism. Neither book is all of a piece. Schafer is concerned to develop a new set of language rules for psychoanalysis. He is tired of Freud's speculative biology: "it is high time we stopped using this mixed physico-chemical and evolutionary biological language altogether." Like Ricoeur (and surprisingly, in both cases) he looks somewhat to British linguistic philosophy for help. His aim is an interpretative language of action and agency to replace that of reaction and passivity—and this even for concepts of emotion. Here, then, is another semantics of desire. Emotion and affect are building-blocks of Freud's theories, but, as in nearly all psychology that takes them seriously, entered as primitive terms. Neu too devotes a most scholarly volume to the elucidation of emotion concepts, examining Hume's and Spinoza's theories and various therapies. His argument that Spinoza's doctrine makes philosophic sense of Freudian theory and therapy could suit Schafer very well. For Spinoza, emotions essentially involve thought and can be active or passive depending on that thought. If Freudianism is metaphysics given substance then re-thinking the metaphysics is re-thinking the substance.

SOMEONE HAD TO NOTICE, sometime, that the substance is thinking for itself, sometimes about the same matters. R. D. Laing's hermeneutic approach—"intelligibility" is his term and theme—did just this. I had felt that interest in Laing was on the wane. Lacan is becoming the rage among undergraduates, very few of whom have tried to read him. Laing used to be closely read by most students; that is no longer so, though I am reminded that my attitude to Laing was recently vetted by a girl deciding whether to take my course. Interest in Laing may be entering its second phase, for here are two book-length studies of his thought and practice appearing

[6] Barnaby B. Barratt, "Freud's Psychology as Interpretation", *Psychoanalysis and Contemporary Science*, Volume 5 (1976), examines these problems thoroughly.

[7] Serge Moscovici, *La Psychanalyse: son image et son public* (Presses Universitaires de France, revised edition, 1976).

[8] *A New Language for Psychoanalysis*. By ROY SCHAFER. Yale University Press, $20.00, £14.50.

[9] *Emotion, Thought and Therapy*. By JEROME NEU. Routledge, £6.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

together. By one of them, Martin Howarth-Williams' dogged master's thesis in sociology,[10] I am persuaded that Laing is more important than I had allowed. Early brilliance dissipated, he had seemed to run wild. Reading *studies* of Laing, however, affords a different sense of his work, both more and less historical. Freud, after all, ran wild. Who takes seriously his *Moses and Monotheism*, unless, like the sensitive Marthe Robert, to understand the man? Nobody cares that he championed the thesis of one Looney that Shakespeare was the Earl of Oxford. On Woodrow Wilson, Freud achieved the Freudian put-down at its opinionated worst. Even before taking a "reading" of Freud, we have defined the *oeuvre* selectively; and Andrew Collier [11] concludes that we must do the same for Laing. One is reminded, too, that Freud did his Freudian work in the second half of his life, and Laing has time yet for Laingianism.

Roy Schafer remarks that to many readers Laing will seem to speak about, if not to, themselves. His constituency includes the "ontologically insecure", the "schizoid", *in extremis* the "schizophrenic." The others wear the alienated mask of complacent sanity. With an us-them distinction of this order, and an urgent sense of human rights and wrongs, it should not surprise that Laing's thought became political—the seeds were always there. The alternative turn for his moral passion was religious, and this too emerged early and is maintained. Howarth-Williams' presiding text is Laing's stunning proclamation of 1964: "The only way we can define our aim is as this: to reveal the greater glory of God."

The French connection is still with us, and still we are behind the Parisian times. How many of those who have resonated to Laing but would never struggle with *Being and Nothingness* or the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* realise the extent to which they were reading Sartre? And do those who went along with Laing into his critique of microsocial politics know the extent to which they moved in the shadow of Sartre, from existential phenomenology to Sartre's neo-Marxism? Not that Laing has been at pains to conceal his influences; but his style effectively overcomes the obscurity of his Continental masters.

Remarkably, we find the same kind of ontological flip as effected by Marx and Freud (and back again by Ricoeur). As Andrew Collier, a philosopher, says, Laing "gives an empirical content to what were metaphysical doctrines."

---

[10] *R. D. Laing: His Work and Its Relevance for Sociology*. By MARTIN HOWARTH-WILLIAMS. Routledge, £4.40, $10.00.

[11] *R. D. Laing: The Philosophy and Politics of Psychotherapy*. By ANDREW COLLIER. Harvester Press, £8.95.

The Psychology of Consciousness

2nd edition

Robert E. Ornstein

£4.20

The Second Edition of this extremely successful and influential work in psychology examines the nature of consciousness, taking as its major organizing principle the functioning of the two hemispheres of the brain. Writing in a compelling, highly readable style, the author discusses the results of research on left-right hemisphere functioning and raises implications about it for psychology, education, biofeedback, and other areas of human experience. Dr. Ornstein goes beyond Western scientific thinking and research to incorporate Eastern psychologies.

The Longest War

Sex Differences in Perspective

Carol Tavris and Carole Offir

£3.50

The authors present a penetrating and critical analysis of current research, current theoretical frameworks, and consequences of sex differences in an entertaining, direct and informative style.

"This book, quite simply, is the most readable, up-to-date, and balanced compendium of what is known about sex differences that I have read. . . . I discovered much that was new, and what was already known to me was written about so entertainingly it appeared fresh."
Barry Hopson in British Journal of Guidance and Counselling.

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Ltd.
24–28 Oval Road
London NW1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Another set of ideas is naturalised, another ontology given substance. Again the patient in the clinic is supposed to carry some of the burden —without him, the trick cannot be worked, and Laing has to speak of "schizophrenia" long after vilifying the medical diagnostic tradition which invented it. This time, however, the patient is allowed to speak for himself, for Laing's is not a theory of false consciousness—not, that is, till he comes to speak of the alienated sane. None the less, what Laing's patients speak of, in a nutshell, is precisely their false consciousness—the conception has passed to *them*. On philosophy's side of this strange line are (*vis-à-vis* Laing) Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Tillich and Sartre. "Ontological insecurity" was actually Tillich's term, for an *a priori* of the human condition. Though he handles it well, Martin Howarth-Williams risks compounding matters further by using Sartre's method for comprehending the Sartrean Laing. I am reminded of a recent seminar I attended, an explication by computer simulation of a dream interpretation. The dream, a famous one, had been dreamed by Freud, remembered by Freud, reported by Freud, and given a specific interpretation by Freud in accordance with a theory of personality also by Freud—all this by 1900. Against this recursiveness the computer of 1977 stood no chance. Marthe Robert, by her psychological and biographical sensibilities, makes more of the same dream than either Freud or the computer did.

COLLIER MACMILLAN

The Problems of the Philosophy of History
by Georg Simmel

(Translated by Guy Oakes — Monmouth College)
According to Simmel, history is possible only as a product of the constitutive activities of the mind. Thus, he analyses such issues as the relationship between history, art, science and philosophy; the relationship between value and meaning in history; and the concept of progress. This classic in social thought is Simmel's chief contribution to the methodology of the social sciences.
02.928890.8 220 pages £11.25

Knowing and Acting
S. Toulmin — *University of Chicago*
This exciting introduction to philosophy engages the readers' personal experiences in a way that shows how their own intuition and untutored questions relate to the main phases in the development of philosophy. It provides an untechnical approach that strikes a balance between the historical and the substantive — analytical.
02.421020.X 310 pages £3.80

COLLIER MACMILLAN LTD.
STOCKLEY CLOSE, WEST DRAYTON
MIDDLESEX UB7 9BE

BOTH FREUD'S AND LAING'S are interpretations of culture. Freud, speaking only theoretically, naturalised us all. Laing sees it coming true, and would inspire a resistance movement. Depersonalisation is simultaneously an aim of scientific theory, a textbook symptom of schizophrenia, and a fact of daily life. Collier repeatedly insists that Laing is really a Freudian, but the claim does not convince. Laing's stand is against both Freudian and more obviously scientific modes of naturalisation and their lay counterparts in man's mundane inhumanity to man. The era of Psychological Man, which Philip Rieff claims was inaugurated by Freud and which has certainly celebrated his eponym, has brought us to a sorry pass. We do not know whether we are subject or object, nor which to try to be.

Foucault says that the objective study of man is a grim mistake, soon to pass away. In observing its twists and turns, he might note that with Laing the subject-object split and its implication, false consciousness, still very much with us, are deployed in a new space. This is not simply Laing's theoretical space: these theoretical problems are at large and constitute the plight and suffering of many. The Dreadful has already Happened—as Laing is fond of quoting from Heidegger (at least seven times, counts Howarth-Williams). Thus Laing's patients, and presumably much of his audience, may actually speak of these things without needing further interpretation. They are not themselves, they are many selves, they are inner and outer selves, they are beside themselves, they are petrified by self-consciousness, they are false selves, hollow selves, divided selves, they have no selves. *Theirs* is now the problem of the mixed and contradictory discourse of meaning and mechanism, reason and cause, subject and object—for Sartre and Laing, praxis and process.

These are no longer just academic problems, the tidying of psychoanalytic language. They are, in a non-positivist sense, out there, in self-reflection. True, influential accounts have their lexical effect; and some Laingian talk, like much Freudian talk, will be psychobabble and cultural slang. Laing will not win the Nobel Prize for discovering the cause of schizophrenia, but he does speak for intelligibility on behalf of his constituency, and reflects their less eloquent words. His moral passion too readily finds villains, such as parents and the sane. He is reproached,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by Stokely Carmichael and Peter Sedgwick, for not being political enough; but they may not appreciate where he stands. With fine rhetoric or trembling rage, Laing has tried to stare down a century of naturalisation into false consciousness. He may not succeed; he may, for all I know, have given up in bitter defeat. But the task was one for heroes.

Reckonings

Wittgenstein on Mathematics—By MICHAEL DUMMETT

IT WAS EARLY IN 1950 that philosophers of my generation in Oxford, those, that is to say, who were undergraduates or graduate students in the immediately post-War years, first saw any of Wittgenstein's work other than the *Tractatus* and "Some Remarks on Logical Form." In that year, three of Wittgenstein's later works suddenly arrived in Oxford in the form of typescripts: they were the Blue Book, the Brown Book and the Notes on the Mathematics Lectures, the latter in what has turned out to be Bosanquet's version, one of the four from which the present volume[1] has been edited. The first two had been dictated by Wittgenstein for circulation among a select group; the third was merely one person's record of a set of lectures Wittgenstein had given. All three circulated in Oxford with extreme rapidity: there being no xerox machines, the system was for everyone who obtained a set to find five other people who wanted one, engage a typist to type out the entire work with four carbons, and then sell them at cost price.

It is difficult to convey the excitement of reading these works for the first time. Wittgenstein was a distant presence of which we were all intensely aware, but an utterly enigmatic presence. I came up to Oxford, out of the army, just one term after the celebrated meeting of the Jowett Society, in the summer of 1947, which Wittgenstein attended and at which he talked at great length, and so had never even seen him. We were all vividly conscious of his being there in Cambridge, giving classes to selected audiences, and conscious also of the atmosphere of secrecy that surrounded him; we believed that he was probably a great genius, revealing to those fortunate enough to be admitted to his lectures a dazzling and completely original treatment of philosophical questions: but we did not know what it was that he said. There were, indeed, disciples of his, like Wisdom, whose writings we read, and Miss Anscombe, whose lectures we heard; but we could not be sure how faithfully they represented their teacher. And then, suddenly, by what channel I never knew, these works arrived, smuggled into Oxford from that city that had been as closed to us as Lhasa.

On me, at least, their impact was tremendous. The force of the personality came through even the pages of blurred typescript: for weeks after I first read them, all that would come out, whenever I attempted to write any philosophy, was a ridiculous pastiche of Wittgenstein, the stylistic mannerisms if not the substance. Later, when, after Wittgenstein's death and the publication of the *Philosophical Investigations*, the secrecy had been dissolved, I remained extremely grateful, not only to whoever had circulated the Blue and Brown Books, but also to the person who had pirated the Notes on Mathematics; to the extent that, when it was published, I understood the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, textually quite distinct from the Notes but frequently overlapping in philosophical content, I did so because I had previously read and re-read the Notes.

BOSANQUET'S NOTES, which were written in the third person, had a peculiar charm, due in part to that convention. They opened with the words,

> How is it that Wittgenstein, who is a philosopher and knows little about mathematics, has a right to talk about the foundations of mathematics?

In Miss Diamond's version, conflated from four sets of notes, this appears as:

> I am proposing to talk about the foundations of mathematics. An important problem arises from the subject itself: How can I—or anyone who is not a mathematician—talk about this? What right has a philosopher to talk about mathematics?

No doubt her version is much closer to the words actually uttered on 23rd January 1939; but I do not think it is just sentimental attachment to something that had a great effect on me that leads me to think that some of the charm has gone. It

[1] *Wittgenstein's Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics, Cambridge, 1939*. Edited by CORA DIAMOND from the notes of R. G. BOSANQUET, NORMAN MALCOLM, RUSH RHEES and YORICK SMYTHIES. Cornell University Press, $18.50; Harvester Press, £12.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

appears, too, that Bosanquet's version was incomplete: there were four further lectures. All the same, it finished marvellously:

> This is most important. It has puzzled Wittgenstein more than he can say, how there can be a short-cut through logic. For the moment he will leave us puzzled.

The end in Miss Diamond's version—the end of a lecture not included in Bosanquet's—sounds authentic, but is less delightful; an abrupt sentence reading:

> The seed I'm most likely to sow is a certain jargon.

Miss Diamond has cobbled together this version of Wittgenstein's lectures from four sets of notes, all of them incomplete, although it is amazing to me that anyone was able to take such copious notes as to make the exercise possible at all. There are some thirty-odd passages where she reports that the versions differed substantially and that she has therefore had to guess at the original form of the remarks. Some might protest that they should have been given the texts of the divergent notes in these cases, so as to estimate the original intention for themselves, but I think she was right not to inflate the length and price of the book in this way: perhaps, however, for the sake of the scholarly, transcripts of all the notes ought to be deposited in some university library.

On the whole, I should judge that Miss Diamond has done an excellent job. Nevertheless, we should not be deluded into thinking that we are reading Wittgenstein, not even, as Miss Diamond warns us, unrevised Wittgenstein. The process of transmission has been too indirect to justify any such idea. Rather, it is as if we were standing outside the closed door of a lecture room, occasionally unable to catch what is being said inside, most of the time hearing a muffled voice which we can largely follow, sometimes sure that we must have misheard, never able to be quite certain that we have heard aright.

FRANK RAMSEY (who was so enormously influenced by Wittgenstein's earlier work, the *Tractatus*) accused the intuitionists, Brouwer and Weyl, of introducing Bolshevism into mathematics; and he meant the accusation quite seriously—for him, their work was as subversive of cherished traditional practices as was Bolshevist propaganda to Western capitalists. Hilbert, similarly, in a famous cry of defiance to the intuitionists, declared, "No one is going to turn us out of the paradise Cantor has created." Wittgenstein's comment is characteristic:

> I wouldn't dream of trying to drive anyone out of this paradise. I would try to do something quite different: I would try to show you that it is not a paradise—so that you'll leave of your own accord.

He nevertheless feels it necessary to protest that *he* is not introducing Bolshevism into mathematics. Ramsey, no doubt, would have agreed with this; if Brouwer and Weyl were Bolsheviks, then Wittgenstein, in his later phase, was an anarchist.

Consider an arithmetical predicate like "is the sum of two primes." In the view both of a classical mathematician and of an intuitionist, for each natural number, such a predicate either applies to it or does not apply to it: for the classical mathematician, this holds simply because the predicate is well defined; for the intuitionist, it holds because the predicate is decidable—we have an effective means, in principle, for deciding whether or not it applies to any given number. There is disagreement between them, however, over the way we give meaning to a statement involving generalisation over infinitely many natural numbers—for instance Goldbach's conjecture that every even number greater than 2 is the sum of two primes.

The classical mathematician conceives of the matter essentially as follows. Suppose that we assign 1 to every number to which the predicate applies, and 0 to every number to which it does not. Then, if we multiply together all the numbers so assigned to even numbers greater than 2, we shall arrive either at the number 1, in which case Goldbach's conjecture will be true, or at the number 0, in which case it will be false; the conjecture is therefore determinately either true or false.

For the intuitionist, this conception embodies a barbaric mistake about the nature of an infinite process: we cannot specify a determinate number as the final outcome of an infinite process, because an infinite process is by definition one which can never be completed. Hence we can have no conception of the truth of Goldbach's conjecture save as consisting in the existence of a proof of it, a procedure for showing, of each even number greater than 2, that it satisfies the predicate, nor of its falsity save as consisting in a means of deriving a contradiction from the supposition that we could prove it. Since we have no guarantee that we can either prove or disprove the conjecture, we cannot assume that it is either true or false.

WITTGENSTEIN AGREES with the intuitionists both about infinity and about mathematical truth ("What is the criterion for its being so—if not the proof?"); but he has an independent reason for denying that Goldbach's conjecture is a pro-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

position having a determinate truth-value independently of our having a proof or disproof of it. He supposes that, when we multiply very large numbers, we find that we simply cannot attain agreement over the result; and he argues that, in such a case, there simply would not be a right result, a result that God would know, even though we could never be sure of it, since "to say that something is the right result is to say that we acknowledge it. . . . There is nothing for a higher intelligence to know . . . we know as much as God does in mathematics."

Now this is not a mere hypothetical case, it is the actual case: there is a bound on the complexity of computations we can in practice carry out at all, and a bound on the complexity of those we carry out with certainty of reaching agreement. It follows that such a predicate as "is the sum of two primes" cannot be regarded as definitely applying or failing to apply to every number, however large. There will be numbers too large for us to be able to decide whether or not the predicate applies to them; and it is useless to say that the predicate is true of such a number provided that, if we *were* able to perform the computation, we *should* decide that it was, or to say that God must know what the correct outcome of such a computation would be. There is, according to Wittgenstein, nothing for God to know; there *is* no right answer.

From such a standpoint, there is an objection to the classical conception of generalisation over an infinite domain even more direct and telling than the intuitionists' considerations about infinite processes, namely that there is not really a definite truth-value attaching to each statement of the form "*n* is the sum of two primes." We have not really succeeded in associating either the number 1 or the number 0 to each number *n*, according as the predicate does or does not apply to it; and so, of course, it is nonsense to talk about the product of all the infinitely many numbers, each equal to 1 or to 0, which we have in this way associated with the even numbers greater than 2.

This is not to say that Wittgenstein draws the conclusion so boldly and assertively drawn by the intuitionists, that classical mathematicians reason incorrectly. He says from the outset that it is "most important not to interfere with the mathematicians"; he is very reluctant to say of anyone, "They reasoned wrongly." He is not going to drive anybody out of a paradise; he will simply point out that it is not a paradise, and then they will leave of their own accord. But it does not in practice seem to me to make a great deal of difference; a mathematician who really believed what Wittgenstein says could hardly continue to employ classical reasoning.

WITTGENSTEIN'S IDEA that God does not know any more mathematics than we do (except in so far as He can foresee what we are going to do—since, apart from that, there is nothing to be known; that is, since truth attaches to a mathematical statement only in virtue of our acknowledging it as true) is, for him, a consequence of his general reflections concerning rules. Those reflections figure prominently in the *Investigations*, and the present lectures start from them. The existence of a rule—in particular, a rule of computation or one governing the use of a word or symbol—rests ultimately upon the fact of agreement in practice, amongst human beings who have been taught the rule, over its application, a fact not susceptible of further explanation.

Our natural reaction to such a thesis is to protest that one who has genuinely mastered the rule grasps the general principle underlying its applications. Wittgenstein of course allows that, very often, the mastery of a rule is attained by getting to know a formula or general formulation, and, in other cases, is manifested by the ability to frame such a general formulation. But every formula, every general statement of the rule, could still be misapplied, and we should not say that someone able to give the formula knew the rule unless he applied it as we all do; and we cannot without circularity or an infinite regress

David Holbrook

Education, Nihilism & Survival

David Holbrook argues that negative doctrines in religion and morals are being thrust upon us on a massive scale: in films, in books, and most important, in education. The young, especially, are being persuaded that life has no meaning, that the only way of living is to exploit others and to seek pleasure.

He believes that in order to replace the implicit nihilism taught today, there is an urgent need for a fundamental revolution in our philosophy of life. £3·00

Darton Longman & Todd

89 Lillie Road, London SW6 1UD

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

suppose that, in each case, someone's knowledge of how to apply a formula consists in his knowing another formula.

Faced with this, we are inclined grudgingly to admit that, in the last resort, Wittgenstein is right, but to suppose that that concession does not make much difference. Wittgenstein's example of the large multiplication sums shows, however, that he took it as making an enormous difference: even multiplication is well defined only for numbers which we can in practice multiply with confidence, because only in that case is there the agreement in practice which is needed to supply an application for "correct" and "incorrect."

WHY ARE WE INCLINED to think that conceding Wittgenstein to be right in the last resort does not make much difference to anything? I think that this is probably because we are impressed by the fact that any computation is a sequence of operations, each of one of a restricted number of kinds. A multiplication sum, for instance, consists in repeated multiplications and additions of single-digit numbers. Suppose that we grant Wittgenstein's thesis for the rules governing the basic constituent operations of a computation-procedure: we concede that, for each instance of any such operation, we might have regarded something quite different as the analogue of what we have done in other cases, and that nothing makes it the true analogue save the fact that we in practice concur in so regarding it.

All the same, what entitles us to speak of a rule governing the operation is the fact, repeatedly emphasised by Wittgenstein, that we do not in practice disagree over how it is to be applied; and this holds good just as much for an instance of such an operation embedded in an enormous computation as for any other. Suppose that we are concerned with a vast multiplication sum, which it takes the most skilled human calculator a month to do by hand; and suppose that we find that, however many individuals perform the same calculation, and however many times each checks and re-checks his working, they just cannot reach agreement on the correct answer. It is the nub of Wittgenstein's position to infer that there is then no such thing as *the* correct answer (and hence no correct answer either to the question whether a number of the order of magnitude of the product is prime or composite).

But we are inclined to reason as follows. Consider any one attempt at the multiplication sum. It consists of an immensely long sequence of operations of a kind familiar to a child at primary school. If we isolated any one such operation, we should have no difficulty in obtaining agreement over whether it had been performed correctly or incorrectly; the difficulty arises only because of the length of the computation as a whole. It is therefore an objective matter whether or not each of the constituent operations has been performed correctly, even though the criterion for its correctness rests solely upon our propensity to acknowledge it as correct. But the sum as a whole is correct just in case each of its constituent operations is correct. Hence God must know, even though we cannot, whether the sum has been done correctly or not; God must know what the right answer is.

WITTGENSTEIN'S CONSTANT ADMONITION appears to be, "Do not etherealise; do not hypothesise general principles to which we are striving to conform, or imagine an external reality which, by various indirect means, we are trying to uncover: but look at what actually happens, at what we actually do." No one should doubt that this is often good advice to give; the question is whether it is not sometimes the wrong advice. I did not cite the foregoing objection to Wittgenstein's thesis about multiplication as a knock-down argument, but only as a diagnosis of our inclination to suppose that we can concede his fundamental point concerning rules and then carry on much as before. We are disposed to think that there may be some basic rules, out of which all other rules are compounded, and to which Wittgenstein's thesis may apply, but that, given those basic rules, what we normally believe about the complex rules compounded out of them remains unaffected.

I do not think that this simple way of protecting ourselves from the anarchy that Wittgenstein's views appear to threaten is satisfactory; for of course the rules governing, e.g., multiplication do not reduce without residue to those governing the basic operations of multiplying and adding single-digit numbers, but inescapably involve also those determining the order in which these basic operations are performed. It would be the same for any procedure which we should be unable to carry out accurately, or at all—counting a football crowd, for example. It is possible to break the procedure down into sub-operations so simple that no doubt could arise over the execution of any one of them; but the complexity then reappears in the rules determining which operation has to be performed at any point.

TO SAY THAT Wittgenstein's arguments cannot be swiftly dismissed or restricted in application to a harmless range of basic operations is not to grant that his conclusions carry conviction. He is, of course, well aware that, when simple methods cease to be reliable, more sophisticated

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ones are invoked. No one can stand on a football ground and count the crowd in the stadium, but it can be counted mechanically by turnstiles at the exits; even the population of London can be counted in a census. Multiplications that we cannot perform can be carried out, if required, by an electronic calculator or computer. We are not inhibited from measuring the distance from the Earth to the Sun by the fact that we cannot place footrules between them.

The question is not the practical one of whether we can *find* ways of *giving* answers, but the theoretical one of whether the primitive methods that we use to give answers in simple cases already determine what constitutes the correct answer in every case. Our overwhelming inclination is to believe that they do: that anyone who knows how to count already understands what would be meant by using a 20-digit number to give the number of stars in the universe; that anyone who knows how to show that 103 is prime already knows what would be meant by saying that that 20-digit number is prime; that distance is distance, whether it is a micron, a mile or a million light-years.

We think this, not merely because of the empirical fact that different methods give the same answers in overlapping areas of applicability, but because we see them as governed by the same underlying principles. Whether a human being counts or the turnstiles click, a one-to-one correlation is being established with an initial segment of the numerals; the computer simulates our own procedures of calculation. Wittgenstein is unimpressed by the conception of guiding principles. For him, what gives sense to the question is that it has a correct answer, and what makes an answer correct is that we are able to agree in acknowledging it as correct. Since any method of obtaining an answer is applicable only over a certain range, the meaning of the question can never be fully determined for every possible case.

I DO NOT BELIEVE that Wittgenstein's arguments can be easily rebutted; but I also do not believe that he does justice to the strength of the objections to them. This is odd, because, in other connections, he frequently insists on the necessity of attending, not merely to what is said or done, but to the *point* of what is said or done; he might, therefore, be expected to sympathise with the idea of a guiding principle to the extent of distinguishing between the details of a procedure and its point, which it could share with other procedures differing in detail. I shall not here further attempt to reconcile what is sound in Wittgenstein's arguments with what is sound in the objections to them, and indeed, I am unsure how to do so; but such a reconciliation is required if this matter is to be resolved. At present, philosophers largely ignore this cluster of Wittgenstein's ideas, because they perceive that they cannot be wholly correct, and because they run counter to the prejudices that philosophers have in common with everyone else; but, even if, as I think, there is something wrong with the conclusions Wittgenstein drew from those ideas, justice should be done to them.

MORE GENERALLY, it is plain that Wittgenstein did not handle satisfactorily the notion of a mistake in applying a procedure or a rule. In the early lectures, much use is made, as an example, of Gauss's proof of the impossibility of constructing the regular heptagon with ruler and compass. Wittgenstein says that this proof does not show that one might not, in practice, by fiddling about with a ruler and compass, produce a regular heptagon. The mathematician A. M. Turing, who was present at the lectures, and whose comments are about five times as numerous as those of any other member of the audience, remarks correctly that what it shows is that we cannot give instructions for constructing a regular heptagon. But Wittgenstein denies this too: "I might give in-

The Philosophical Quarterly

Contents of Volume 28, *No.* 111, *April* 1978

Berkeley's Theory of Abstract Ideas *C. C. W. Taylor*
Common Knowledge *Jane Heal*
Hume and the Social Contract *Paul Brownsey*
What is Jurisprudence? *R. H. S. Tur*

DISCUSSION
The Reduction of B-Statements *George Schlesinger*

BOOK REVIEWS BOOKS RECEIVED

Edited in the University of St Andrews by Bernard Mayo with the assistance of Christopher Bryant, Anthony Ellis and Stephen Read. Published for the Scots Philosophical Club by the University of St Andrews

Annual Subscriptions:
Individuals £4.00 ($10.50)
Institutions £7.00 ($17.50)
Single issues £1.25 or $3.00
(Institutions £2.00 or $5.00)
for orders placed directly with the Journals Manager, Scottish Academic Press, Ltd., 33 Montgomery Street, EDINBURGH EH7 5JX, Scotland.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

structions to someone and he might go on constructing heptagon after heptagon." What the proof does is to persuade us to exclude the expression "construction of the regular heptagon" from our notation: it does not assure us, of some conceivable event, that it will never occur; it imposes a certain restriction on how we shall be prepared to describe whatever occurs.

This is in line with the whole thrust of much of Wittgenstein's discussion: he wants to persuade us to adopt a view of mathematics, not as demonstrating substantial results about what is and is not possible, but as creating paradigms in terms of which we describe things, an ever more systematic framework of description. In spite of his several disclaimers ("I have no right to want you to say anything"; "I have no point"), it is plain that, in this, Wittgenstein had a vision of what he took mathematics to be, a vision that he tries again and again to communicate to his audience.

But, in the heptagon example, it is clear that Wittgenstein does not succeed in making out his case. It is true that the existence of the proof of non-constructibility does not render it inconceivable that we should hit on a set of instructions apparently enabling us to construct regular heptagons: but that is because there might be a mistake in the proof. It has happened that theorems have for many years been accepted to which there subsequently turned out to be counter-examples; we can seldom rule out the possibility that there is a mistake in what has been acknowledged as a proof. If such a set of instructions were to be devised, we should have an apparent counter-example to Gauss's theorem about which regular polygons are constructible; we should know that there must be a mistake either in the proof of the theorem or in the identification of the alleged counter-example, and should set about to discover which.

It thus seems that Wittgenstein confuses the *a priori* character of mathematics—the necessity of its results whenever they are genuine—with certainty, which is not a general characteristic of it; because we are in principle capable of recognising a proof as correct or incorrect, he assumes that we never accept a proof unless we are not merely assured but *certain* of its validity, and hence are prepared to "put it in the archives" and maintain it against all counter-evidence. Turing rightly insists on the possibility of error, but Wittgenstein fails to take his point: on one occasion, when the immediate topic was the multiplication of three-digit numbers (in which it is easy to make mistakes, though also easy to spot them), he responds to Turing's observation by shifting the example and asking what it would be to find that we had always been mistaken in saying that $12 \times 12 = 144$.

IT HAS BEEN COMMONPLACE to express the conclusive character of mathematical proof by saying that only in mathematics do we attain certainty; and it seems that Wittgenstein allowed himself to fall into the trap of offering a new explanation of this alleged certainty of mathematical results, instead of exposing it as spurious. We cannot but contrast unfavourably his imaginary accounts of the cavalier manner in which mathematicians would treat hypothetical apparent counter-examples with the careful descriptions by Imre Lakatos in his *Proofs and Refutations*[2] of how they have in fact treated actual ones. I am not recommending Lakatos's philosophical conclusions any more than Wittgenstein's; but they have the merit of really having been based on seeing what we actually do, as, despite his advocacy of that way of proceeding, Wittgenstein's do not.

Wittgenstein's vision of mathematics cannot, I believe, be sustained; it was a radically faulty vision. Nevertheless, although this book is necessarily an imperfect reconstruction of Wittgenstein's words, and although those words were impromptu and unrevised, they were words spoken by a profound philosopher who devoted a great part of his time throughout his life to thinking about mathematics. It therefore contains much more gold than I have been able here to indicate, gold which it will take much intellectual labour fully to extract. The English into which Miss Diamond has rendered the four sets of notes she was using is undistinguished and surely does not bear the stamp of Wittgenstein's personality, as all his writing does; but at least we are spared split infinitives and similar inappropriate Americanisms, save for the inescapable "I would/will" for "I should/shall", a solecism which, for all I know, Wittgenstein himself may have committed. There are many irritating features, not least Wittgenstein's inability to acknowledge that anyone else is right; it happens several times to Casimir Lewy, in particular, to say things that Wittgenstein himself is going to say a page or two later, only to have as Wittgenstein's immediate reaction a change of subject (see, *e.g.* p. 41, or pp. 45 and 47). But, with all these defects, the book is one that must absorb anyone interested in the philosophy of mathematics, particularly since the expression of Wittgenstein's thought is far more direct and unguarded than in the *Remarks*; and we owe much gratitude to Miss Diamond for her labour in producing it.

[2] Imre Lakatos, *Proofs and Refutations: The logic of Mathematical Discovery* (Cambridge University Press, 1976).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Peter Redgrove

Box Box

I. Music Box

He makes chests of tools of elm, polished pale wood,
Finely jointed like dolls' fingers holding each corner fast;
So perfect is his craftsmanship that if you squeeze
Such a box in your hand it gives off swift snatches of solemn music.

II. Tooth-Box

The Bach cantata that brought him suddenly to age
And realisation, no. 21; his milk-teeth pattered out
Like ripped shirt-buttons as he cried out "Oh! I see. . . ."
Are semi-lunar upper and lower rows fastened in elm gums
Of a box-model of his mouth fastened with a hush-clasp.

III. Stink-Box

A scent-organ arranged in an elm-chest like a locked console
With a slippery polished bench to confront it: he chooses
To sniff Incense of Arson first, then the tremendous
Scent of Mahomet at Ramadan, and then a snuff made of
Colm shale, the odour of millions of years resting
In strata, and of fine-ground Devonian sandstone,
The vermilion earth-cellars of Exeter: he resolved to buy
A supply of geological snuff to evoke the place
Where he was made and the soil he first woke up in,
The white earth of a baby; he will pinch snuff before ever
Speaking, with his nose will touch his roots, like any dog,
Like Hardy's Father, dying, called for a glass
Of well-water to know where he was.

IV. Ghost-Box

A chest of cheese-cloths for constructing ghosts, manufactured
From swathings of finest blue cheese that have grave-odour, grave-colour
Of delicate shine as it wafts on the medium's jointed rods;
Cheese is a sacred food since it shines and is edible decay;
The medium's tricks are holy pageant to those who eat cheese
Puzza come la natura d'una donna.

V. House-Box

He drinks the iridescent, deep-black, beetle-coloured wine
At midnight in the soughing halls of poplar
Through which the death's head courts its plain-fleeced mate;
His house behind him in the gloom is box-fitted,
The panelling is elm, and so are the pianos, his studs,
Pistols and suits are shut in neat boxes, and tomorrow,
He will for a kissing-cousin walk her elm coffin with alack.
It is a good thing for trees his avenue cannot be jointed, is poplar.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DISCUSSION

The Procrustean Ideal

Libertarians v. Egalitarians—By ANTONY FLEW

LET ME begin by distinguishing some different interpretations of equality. For not every ideal of equality constitutes a threat to liberty. On the contrary: the most fundamental of these ideals is itself essentially connected with respecting every individual's rights *to choose*, in as many respects as is practically consistent with the corresponding equal rights of everyone else.

The first basic distinction is between, on the one hand, ideals or norms and, on the other hand, facts or putative facts. The second paragraph of the American Declaration of Independence begins: "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal . . .*" But it would be quite wrong on this account to discredit the Signers with some foolish belief that babies come identical, that there are no genetically determined differences of physique, of temperament, and of ability. For those wise men at once glossed the phrase "all Men are created equal" with an explanation showing that this was for them a matter, not of what allegedly *is* the case, but of what ideally *ought* to be. The complete sentence thus reads:

> "We hold those truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."[1]

No statement of the first (*is*) kind by itself either logically presupposes or entails any proclamation of the second (*ought*) sort. As an illustration of the nature and an indication of the significance of this first basic distinction, it is perhaps worth repeating yet once more that this necessary truth provides one of two independently decisive reasons why immoral conclusions about the propriety of discriminating either for, or against, individuals upon grounds of racial group membership cannot be validly deduced from premises stating only that certain racial groups are, on average, either superior or inferior to others in their natural endowments. (The second of these often neglected yet both independently quite decisive reasons is that nothing about the particular characteristics of a particular member of a group follows from any general statement about the average of that group: you may be a dwarf or a giant or neither, and yet still happen to belong to a group which is on average either very tall or very short or neither.)[2]

When J. V. Stalin said to a visiting American Senator "You believe that men are equal, I know that they are not", Stalin had missed the point. What he knew, his visitor knew too. People are in fact born with very unequal potentialities. What, apparently, Stalin did not know was that the Signers were neither asserting nor presupposing a false proposition in biology or psychology. They were instead demanding that certain very general basic rights ought to be guaranteed.

THE SECOND BASIC DISTINCTION is between three different ideals of equality. The first and hardest to define seems to have no accepted distinguishing label—perhaps partly for those reasons. Until and unless something better is suggested, let us call this, baldly, *personal equality*. The second is usually called *equality of opportunity*, although it might be better described as fair and open competition for scarce opportunities. This is what the great French Revolution of 1789 meant by "the career open to the talents." The third is, by contrast with the second, *equality of outcome* or *equality of result*.

[1] For a study of the background beliefs of the Founding Fathers on these issues, see: Wilhelm Sjöstrand, *Freedom and Equality as Fundamental Educational Principles in Western Democracy from John Locke to Edmund Burke* (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1973), Chapter II.

[2] Both these two fallacies (and "racism" in the sense implicitly defined above) are in fact totally repudiated by Arthur Jensen and H. J. Eysenck, two psychologists who have in recent years been ferociously abused for daring to question the assumption that there are no such average differences. Compare "The Jensen Uproar" in my *Sociology, Equality, and Education* (1976).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE FIRST of these three ideals can best be introduced as a secularised version of the traditional Judaeo-Christian insistence that every soul is of equal value in the eyes of God. However much we actually do differ and perhaps should differ in other ways, we all have our lives to live and our decisions to make; and in this most fundamental respect we ought all to recognise one another as equals. As a less poetic, sexually more scrupulous poet might have written: "A person is a person for a' that. . . ." It was this ideal, in a fully secularised form, which Immanuel Kant was expressing when he laid down "The Formula of the End in Itself." After taking "rational nature" or—as we would be more likely to say—personality as "something *whose existence* has *in itself* an absolute value", Kant's Categorical Imperative becomes:

> "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end."[3]

Once the next two ideals have been picked out and docketed, they may seem to be unconfusably different both from the first and from each other. They are, nevertheless, quite commonly assumed to be compatible companions, even where they are not actually mistaken to be the same. Thus the Editors of a recent sourcebook on *The "Inequality" Controversy* write, without a qualm of historical conscience, of America's traditional "commitment to equality of opportunity *and to equality of results*." They really ought to know better. But they even go on to say of one of their contributors that he examines this "concept of equality of opportunity" and "traces the development of the concept to its logically inevitable definition as equality of results."[4]

YET FOR MOST PEOPLE, though not for all, a large part, though not the whole of the point of equality of opportunity lies in its being opportunity to better the condition of themselves and their families; whether this is for them a matter of being better off than they are now or would otherwise be, or whether it is for them also or alternatively a matter of relativities and hence essentially of being better off in the future than (certain) others then are. For this perhaps deplorable majority the intrinsic rewards to be found in developing and using talents are as nothing compared with the further and extrinsic rewards which they hope by these means to win. Suppose that you first offer equality of opportunity; and then explain that, as a devout egalitarian of the third sort, you also propose to ensure that, whatever opportunities are or are not taken, everyone is going to be ground down and kept down to your ideal of equality of results. You will not be very warmly or widely thanked for your first offer, I think, once your second intention is fully understood. For, as Confucius really did say, without cynical exaggeration and with traditional Chinese realism: "It is not easy to find a man who has studied for three years without aiming at pay."[5]

IT IS, I SUSPECT, mainly because they are themselves perhaps rather guiltily aware of the wide unpopularity of some of the implications of their Procrustean ideal that our contemporary egalitarians of outcome so often confound it with equality of opportunity.

One instructive method is by tripping over that favourite cliché "*life-chances*." Jean Floud, for instance, who is much respected as a social engineer, does this in a recent article under the characteristic and revealing title "Making Adults More Equal: The Scope and Limitations of

[3] *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, in *The Moral Law*, translated by H. J. Paton (1948), pp. 90–91.

[4] D. M. Levine and M. J. Bane, *The "Inequality" Controversy* (1975), pp. 5, 198; but compare and contrast p. 11. Italics added.

[5] *The Analects of Confucius* (edited and with a translation by W. E. Soothill, 1910), p. 399 (VIII§ 2).

If you love words,

you'll love VERBATIM, with its articles, book reviews, and correspondence about the English Language. Send £2.75 for a year's subscription *4 issues* to:

VERBATIM

Laurence Urdang Limited
2d Market Square, Aylesbury, Bucks.
Refund in full if not pleased with first issue

AUTHORS WANTED BY N.Y. PUBLISHER

A well-known New York subsidy book publisher is searching for manuscripts worthy of publication. Fiction, non-fiction, poetry, juveniles, travel, scientific, specialized and even controversial subjects will be considered. If you have a book-length manuscript ready for publication (or are still working on it), and would like more information and a free booklet, please write:

Vantage Press, Dept. D-52
516 W. 34th St., New York, N.Y. 10001

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Public Educational Policy." She defines the key expression "*life-chances*" in a perfectly straightforward way, "in terms of people's economic and social opportunities." But then, like so many others, she forthwith proceeds to identify differences in educational opportunity with differences in achieved education, life-chances with actual lives. What she is talking about is correlations (reported by Christopher Jencks) between achieved education and achieved income. Yet she insists on calling differences in the former, differences in educational opportunity, while differences in the latter are correspondingly equated with differences in life-chances:

> ". . . differences of educational opportunity do not explain much of the variation in individual incomes. Measures of the independent influence of educational opportunity on people's life-chance give different results."[6]

Connoisseurs of doctrinaire high-handedness will now appreciate an example of an even shorter way of collapsing this fundamental distinction; and consequently identifying the third with the second ideal of equality—equal life-chances with equal lives. "Surely", one Swedish philosopher suggests, "we could always define 'real chance' in such a way that it becomes analytically true that if two members of a society have the same real chance to achieve equality of economic welfare, then their actual economic welfare level will be the same."[7] Yes indeed, nothing easier. Nor more wanton and more wrong.

Personal Equality

AFTER THIS BRIEFLY ILLUSTRATED account of the differences between three current ideals of equality, we are now in a position to consider whether and, if so, how and how far any of these various ideals are enemies to liberty. Of the first it is obvious that the contrary is the truth. The same ideal also demands a measure of democracy, which itself in turn necessitates respect for at least the most fundamental individual liberties.

I suggest that democrats are in any case best advised to ground their—and my—convictions upon the splendid Kantian ideal to which I have just attached the colourless label "personal equality." To do this is to appeal—not to the false and silly doctrine that the majority is always, or even most often, right—but to the true and crucial fact that it is everyone's lives which government is governing. It is the appeal which was superbly put in the 1640s by the russet-coated Captain Rainborough in the Putney Debates of the New Model Army:

> "Really I think that the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live as the greatest he; and therefore truly, Sir, I think it is clear, that every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government; and I do believe that the poorest man in England is not at all bound to that government that he hath not had a voice to put himself under."[8]

He here, as so often, should embrace she!

The connection between democracy and certain minimum individual liberties is logically necessary. For these are those which are the preconditions of its being truly said that citizens made and implemented their decisions on how to cast their votes freely. These preconditions include, for instance, effective guarantees against intimidation. Again, it must be possible to get and to spread relevant information, to discuss issues with other people, and to organise opposition. Besides the minimal civil liberties which are in this way logically necessary to democracy it may be that other and especially economic liberties are also contingently required. For, though it is obviously possible to have a pluralist economy without democracy, there are very strong reasons for believing that a fully socialist (Clause IV) setup is in practice incompatible with authentic (*i.e.* Western: "vote-the-scoundrels out") democratic institutions.

Certainly this contention about the economic preconditions of political pluralism is not peculiar to Milton Friedman, F. A. Hayek, and Sir Keith Joseph.[9] It has also been accepted, albeit with a somewhat sullen inertia, by such right-wing social democrats as Anthony Crosland and Roy Jenkins. And it is seen as a manifest and agreeable lesson of experience by the most powerful and persistent contemporary enemies of democracy—thus the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in Moscow sketches a programme for achieving total and irremovable Communist domination by following "United Front" or "Broad Left" tactics:

> "Having once acquired political power, the working class implements the liquidation of the private ownership of the means of production. . . . As a result, under socialism, there remains no ground for the existence of any opposition parties counterbalancing the Communist Party."[10]

---

[6] *Equalities and Inequalities in Education*, edited by P. R. Cox, H. B. Miles and J. Peel (1975), pp. 37 and 41.

[7] Lars Ericsson, *Justice in the Distribution of Economic Resources* (Stockholm, 1976), p. 130: inverted commas added.

[8] *The Clarke Papers* (edited by C. H. Firth, 1891), Vol. I, p. 301.

[9] Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (1962). F. A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (1944) and *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960). Keith Joseph, *Stranded on the Middle Ground* (1976).

[10] Quoted in *The Economist* (London), 17 June 1972, p. 23. I possess a photo copy of the complete Russian text.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We, however, must put this question aside in order to notice that very illiberal decisions may be reached by impeccably democratic procedures. At some times and in some countries—but not, it seems, in Britain today[11]—a referendum held after a great national debate might well reaffirm legislation refusing "the right to die" to the degradingly senile and the unrelievably ill. Similar referenda might impose and extend various choice-denying monopolies, and all manner of other legal restrictions not needed to safeguard the maximum equal freedoms of every citizen. In the words of John Stuart Mill's classic essay *On Liberty:*

> "The 'people' who exercise the power are not always the same people with those over whom it is exercised; and the self-government spoken of is not the government of each by himself, but of each by all the rest."[12]

ALL THIS IS AS TRUE as it is important. But what is relevant here is that no such illiberal policies are dictated by the first sort of ideal of equality. If anything it forbids them. For what is the categorical imperative never to treat anyone "*simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end*" if it is not an insistence upon everyone's equal right to make their own decisions in the light of their own chosen ends? (Kant's own attempt to derive therefrom an absolute embargo upon suicide is manifestly factitious and unsound, an unhappy product of his own too conservative first-order ethical preconceptions.)

[11] A recent National Opinion Poll revealed a four-to-one majority in favour of the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia.

[12] J. S. Mill, *On Liberty* (Everyman edition, 1910), p. 67.

Choice & Inequality

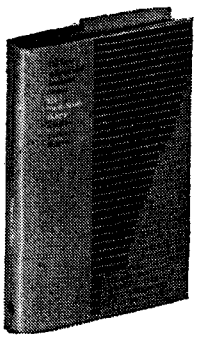
UNAVOIDABLE CONFLICTS with the claims of liberty begin with the second ideal of equality: equality of opportunity. There are two complications which we need to disentangle at once. First, we need to make up our minds whether it really is equality which we are talking about, or only a minimum without a maximum. The idea of a "welfare floor", a state-provided safety-net, is most familiar from other areas of social policy. It was indeed a main theme of Sir Winston Churchill's domestic speeches during his years as Leader of the Conservative Party.

As an ideal this is essentially different from that of a compulsory ceiling, or of anything else requiring measures to pull excellers back (notwithstanding that in practice such safety-nets are

Jagdish N Bhagwati, Editor

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER

The North-South Debate



Leading economists have contributed to this timely collection of essays, presented at an MIT Bicentennial Conference on the New International Economic Order.

The volume is unique in providing systematic, authoritative and insightful reviews of the past history of the issues, their current status, future prospects and economic desirability. Several specific proposals are analyzed imaginatively, and the non-technical style of the contributions makes them accessible to all interested readers. The distinguished contributors include Fred Bergsten, Jagdish Bhagwati, Richard Cooper, Hollis Chenery, Gale Johnson, Harry Johnson, Peter Kenen, Charles Kindleberger and Erik Lundberg.

£12.25 cloth £7.00 paperback

The MIT Press 126 Buckingham Palace Road London SW1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

usually financed in part from progressive direct taxation). Nor is this safety-net ideal at all the same as the egalitarian ideal of state monopoly provision, provision which shall be at the same time both the minimum and the maximum, equal for all.[13] Applying these distinctions to our present area of interest it is easy to see that safety-net measures to spread and increase educational opportunity are measures to extend and to raise the floor rather than to enforce a uniform equal provision. Guided by this different ideal, and by a commitment to liberty, libertarian democrats want to defend, while their egalitarian opponents long to destroy, alternatives to and within the state system.

We also have to ask at what stage in the human life-cycle it is proposed that the desired "equality of opportunity" should begin. There is a world of difference between, at one extreme, applying this notion to adult job applicants or to candidates for tertiary education, and, at the other extreme, applying it to newborn babies or even the freshly fertilised egg. The clashes here are with actual or possible parental liberties and they are the more serious and the more general the nearer the point of application of the ideal is put to the moment of the child's conception. The trouble is that to have been, and to be, raised in a good home is in so many ways so much an advantage. Indeed the criteria of goodness here are, for the most part, at the same time criteria of such advantage.

So, if you want to achieve ideal equality of opportunity from the very beginning, then you have to abolish the home and the family in favour of the universal compulsory comprehensive *crèche*. Failing that, your next best bet is to find ways of minimising home influences, and or of intruding compensatory measures to offset the advantages of above-average and the disadvantages of below-average homes. Any of this must involve substantially circumscribing, if not outright abolishing, the freedom of parents to make homes, and to bring up their children as they see fit; and/or most if not all of the point of their labouring so to do.

The most extreme proposals of this kind are not at present, I believe, on any British agenda. For most of those for whom true equality of opportunity from the earliest stage is a value, it remains one value which can and has to be traded off against others. Yet the intractable inevitability of clashes between this ideal and that of the family with substantial parental rights, and duties, can be illustrated with an example which belongs to the stuff of present-day British educational politics.

UNTIL A FEW YEARS AGO the stock objection to any defence of parental choice in education was to say that in this country real choice is confined to a privileged few able to afford the fat fees of private schools. Although it perhaps did too little justice to the differences between the denominational and the more secular schools within the state system—and although by overlooking the number of those who could afford such fees but preferred to spend their money in other ways it certainly under-estimated the size of this minority—this objection was still substantially correct in what it said. What were wholly wrong, and to any lover of liberty utterly obnoxious, were the supplementary suggestions: that liberties can be of value only to those who are themselves able and willing to make direct use of them; and that no one ought to be allowed to do anything which not everyone can do, or wants to do.

But now market-minded radicals associated with the Institute of Economic Affairs are plugging the idea of educational vouchers.[14] This promises a vast extension of genuine family choice either within the state sector only, or both within and outside it. To this lively liberalising idea the standard response of the wooden authoritarian Left, and of their allies entrenched in the educational bureaucracies, is to protest. First, that, since a lot of parents—and particularly working-class parents—are ignorant and indifferent, such a system, even if it were—like its American anticipators—confined to the public sector, would be bound to produce inequalities as between sump and quality comprehensives. And, second, that (since we know the previous proposition to be true) it must on no account be subjected to the experimental test which might show that a voucher system both tended to raise

[13] These two quite different ideals are clearly confounded in the publisher's puff for Mr Frank Field's *Unequal Britain* (Hutchinson, 1977): "As Director of the Child Poverty Action Group, he draws together evidence from all the major social reports to ask if there is a cycle of inequality in which a large number of people are trapped." Seeing not scarcity but inequality as the evil, Field is, like most of the ideologues of social justice, understandably unconcerned about wealth creation. But it should be remarked that both that unconcern and any commitment to impose and lower a ceiling are, in different ways, incongruous with the stated aims of the organisation which he heads. For it claims, surely, to be concerned with a floor not a ceiling, and with absolutes more than relativities.

[14] The original suggestion, which would surely have won the instant support of J. S. Mill, came from Milton Friedman. But it seems to have been developed for a British context first in A. T. Peacock and J. Wiseman, *Education for Democrats* (1964). Compare: E. G. West, *Economics, Education and the Politician* (1968), *Choice in Welfare* (1970), and A. Maynard, *Experiment with Choice in Education* (1975).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

educational standards and pleased the public. So, when a *Daily Telegraph* editorial advocated just such an experiment, the Secretary of the Working Constituency Labour Party wrote:

> "We should worry less about 'parental choice'. . . . The voucher system, which you claim offers freedom of choice to parents, can only operate at the expense of denying children the equality of opportunity they ought to enjoy in a civilised society. Under this system we would very soon have good schools packed with the fortunate children of competent, caring parents with deprived children from disadvantaged homes languishing in sink schools."[15]

To that I want to reply that this is not, it seems, what actually is happening in those US school areas which are operating a voucher system: that in Britain we already have all too many sink schools; that under a voucher system, outstanding examples, such as William Tyndale School, would be identified, and could be reformed, more quickly; and, finally, that the supercilious, and—in the usual purely abusive sense—élitist suggestions of working-class indifference are grossly unfair to all those obviously working-class parents who during that Tyndale affair protested publicly and appeared before the television cameras. Yet my main reason for giving that quotation is to bring out that the two ideals I have described must indeed be ultimately incompatible. For people in fact are, from the beginning, incorrigibly different. So, where they are permitted to make choices, their choices will not always be in the same sense; and such differences cannot but produce, in some dimension, inequalities.

Absolute Equality?

THE THIRD KIND OF EQUALITY is that of outcome or results. This ideal needs to be considered in the light of a further distinction, developed by Rousseau in the second paragraph of his Dissertation *On the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality of Mankind* (1755). On the one hand, Rousseau says, there is the inequality "which I call natural or physical, because it is established by nature, and consists in a difference of age, health, bodily strength, and the qualities of mind or of the soul." On the other there is what nowadays would be called social inequality, which "depends on a kind of convention, and is established, or at least authorised, by the consent of men." Most contemporary engineers of equality concentrate upon the social, while giving occasional and peripheral attention to schemes for compensating socially by starts and handicaps

[15] 25 November 1975: sneer quotes original.

METHUEN

The Revels History of Drama in English

American Drama Volume VIII

TRAVIS BOGARD, RICHARD MOODY and WALTER J MESERVE

This new title surveys American drama from colonial times to the present day. Its emphasis is on the actors and dramatists of the two centuries since the United States came into being in 1776, as well as on the way in which the development of the drama has reflected the nation's own evolution. In addition to surveying the work of major actors and playwrights the authors describe the exploits of early touring companies, and examine the effect of such diverse influences as the business world, art theatre, and the theatre of special commitment.

£13.00 University Paperback £8.50

Now available in paperback

The Augustan Vision

PAT ROGERS

This study looks at the entire spectacle of Augustan society in an attempt to see English culture as a whole and thus gain greater insight into this critical period in English Literature.

'Professor Rogers can live with, even enjoy, ambiguity, ambivalence, uncertainty; yet his sensitivity to the peculiar features of eighteenth-century culture is an informed and precise one. *The Augustan Vision* is likely to become a standard text for introducing students to eighteenth-century English Literature.' *Modern Language Review*

University Paperback £2.95

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for whatever natural inequalities they can bring themselves to admit. But Christopher Jencks is clearly right in his protest:

> "For a thoroughgoing egalitarian . . . inequality that derives from biology ought to be as repulsive as inequality that derives from early socialisation."[16]

Although this third idea of equality is today widely cherished, and cherished perhaps especially among political intellectuals,[17] it is hard to find any principled statement of which possible human differences are and are not to be condemned as inequalities—or even of why inequalities are supposed to be, as such, evil. It is also true that those who upon this ground urge in particular the reduction of (certain) differences in wealth and income rarely want to advocate an absolute equality in these respects. Bernard Shaw was very much the exception among socialists in advocating a strict equality of incomes. He remained, however, altogether typical in his inflexible refusal to set a costly personal example by surrendering his own very substantial, and therefore on his own account very unjust, surplus above average. But we must not by either of these two observations be misled to conclude that equality of outcome is not being held as a value; that it is not, that is to say, being accepted as a good in itself, good not just as a means but as an end.

Certainly there are those for whom particular egalitarian measures are solely means to other ends. In his robust exposition of *Utilitarian Ethics* Anthony Quinton, for instance, points out that:

> "In most imaginable circumstances the distribution of a hundred oranges among a hundred people that will bring about the largest total utility is that in which each person gets only one. . . . [For] like most objects of desire oranges are subject to the law of diminishing marginal utility."[18]

Utilitarian Ethics

Those for whom equality is thus a means to the utilitarian end will have no inhibitions on accepting incentive inequalities which tend to maximise not just the minimum but the general welfare. But equally certainly there are now many other people for whom equality is a good in itself, perhaps even the pre-eminent or sole good. Thus on 30 December 1974 the editorialist of *The Guardian*, who presumably knows his readers, laid it on the line:

> "Nearly all of us want to get through 1975 with the least damage to social equality."

Again, writing as a supporter of the Liberal Party, A. T. Peacock makes a point of first dismissing the consideration just now seen in Quinton, before proceeding to insist that Liberal support for progressive taxation is based upon "a positive dislike of gross inequality."[19]

Nor are the facts that people want to abolish *some* differences and not others and that even in those *some* they repudiate absolute equality sufficient to show that they are not committed to equality as a value. The first shows that for them it is a value only in certain contexts. But this limitation leaves it none the less a value. The second indicates no more than that its claims are not for them indefeasible, that trade-offs against other values may be tolerated.

"CAN URBAN, INDUSTRIAL, BUREAUCRATIC societies like ours realise the promise of equality and social justice . . . without sacrificing the liberties which they have so far attained?" That was the apt question put about "Equality" in a series of articles in *New Society* on the values proclaimed in the famous motto of successive French republics. Although the author, David Donnison, seems to have been too embarrassed to offer so much as a single illustration of the possible conflict, his conclusion was bold and correct: "That is the central question."[20]

Donnison is an outstandingly suitable spokesman for the socialist establishment brand of British egalitarianism. Righthand man and later successor to Richard Titmuss at the London School of Economics, eponymous chairman of the Donnison Committee and formerly member of other bodies working towards a uniform and universal system of compulsory comprehensive education, appointed to his present top Whitehall job by a Labour Minister of Health and Social Security, he has been honoured (along with Paul Streeten, Michael Young and Alex Ramsay) as one of the four great equalisers.

> "Apart from any influence their writings may have had, those four must by now have planned, directed or managed several billion dollars' worth of three or four countries' capital resources, mostly to the purpose . . . of reducing inequalities. They are ambitious men at the top of severely competitive professions. . . . As far as I know each pays his taxes, takes home two or three times the average family income . . . and would work as well for a great deal less if more equal societies required that."[21]

[16] Christopher Jencks, *Inequality* (1972), p. 73.

[17] On "equality and social justice" as the ideology of this New Class, see Robert Nisbet, "The Fatal Ambivalence", in ENCOUNTER, December 1976; compare my "Equality *or* Justice" in P. A. French (ed.), *Studies in Ethical Theory*.

[18] *Utilitarian Ethics* (1973), pp. 75–6.

[19] The last two quotations are borrowed: the first from Terry Arthur, *Ninety-Five Percent is Crap* (1975), p. 183; and the second from F. A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960), p. 518.

[20] *New Society*, 20 November 1975, p. 424.

[21] H. Stretton, *Capitalism, Socialism and the Environment* (1976), p. vi.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Even the unhallowed ranks of Tuscany can scarce forbear to cheer, "how splendid!", before proceeding, after taking careful aim, to launch an explosive missile question. Upon what grounds of principle are those four just men proposing *not* to yield up their own remaining unequal (and, we must presume, from their own account, socially unjust) excess—until and unless they shall be so compelled by law?

At the end of his original article Donnison asserts that the possible conflict between Freedom and Equality is "the central question." Yet it was an article remarkable for not finding need or space to make the distinctions which I have presented as being fundamental. Donnison did, however, have the grace to begin by conceding that the egalitarianism for which he was speaking is "muddled"; and suggesting, in a usefully provocative way, that it is "muddled because its academic spokesmen were never challenged by sufficiently tough opposition to compel them to clarify their views. . . ." Having thus originally concluded that the possible incompatibility between Freedom and Equality is "the central question", Donnison went on two weeks later in the Correspondence columns—having perhaps been, in the meantime, shaken by the unfamiliar experience of meeting tough academic opposition —to dismiss all libertarian objectors with contempt:

> "It is nonsense to tell us that nations which have more of the one necessarily have less of the other."

Suppose that we are talking about Freedom and Equality in some purely voluntary organisation such as an Israeli kibbutz. Or suppose that we are being presented with a private moral ideal, which adherents will strive first to reach themselves, and afterwards recommend to others by example and by argument. Then there might indeed be no necessary conflict. But that is not how it is. This ideal of "equality and social justice" is in fact one which has been approached, and which it is proposed to continue to approach, primarily, if not quite exclusively, by legal and administrative measures rather than by individual conversion and self-sacrificing self-discipline. It is also in one of its aspects, as I and others have recently been arguing, the Ideology of a New Class of social administrators—people professionally involved in (and personally advanced by) the business of enforcing it.

ALL THIS BEING SO, the true nonsense is to pretend that there is no inverse necessary connection between imposed equality of outcome and

GEORGE ORWELL memorial prize

For the third year of the **George Orwell Memorial Prize**, the **Penguin Publishing Company** are offering an award of £750. The award will be given for an article, essay, or series of articles commenting on current cultural, social or political issues anywhere in the world.

The work must have been published in the UK, either in a newspaper, periodical or pamphlet in the preceding year. For the 1978 award any article or pamphlet which appeared in 1977 will be eligible. The judges will be looking for originality, literary merit and expressive power.

The winner of the 1977 award was John Berger, for his article DRAWN TO THAT MOMENT, first published in *New Society*. The following were shortlisted for the 1977 award: Eric Ashby, Reyner Banham, Norman Macrae, Bernard Levin and Angela Carter.

The following have agreed to serve on the panel of judges this year:

Lord Boyle (chairman) **Dan Jacobson**
Francis Wyndham **David Watt**
Miriam Gross

Submissions to **Penguins should be** sponsored either by the editor of the publication in which the article appeared, or by the organization which commissioned the pamphlet. No entry will be considered unless it is so sponsored.

The closing date for receipt of entries is 31 March 1978. Entries should be addressed to George Orwell Prize, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middx.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

John Salisbury
THE BABY SITTERS
"Superior example of the 'it could happen here' genre. Good, rapid, clever and frightening."
Ian Kennedy Martin
£4.50

David Cook
WALTER
Another remarkable novel by the author of **Albert's Memorial** and **Happy Endings.**
An Alison Press Book £4.25

Walker Percy
LOVE IN THE RUINS
THE LAST GENTLEMAN
Reissues of these two classic works.
each £5.90

Secker & Warburg

liberties for the citizen. Of course there has to be compulsion if everyone is to be got and kept either up or down, as individually appropriate, to the officially approved average level of whatever it may be which is being equalised. No one is suggesting, surely, that those "several billion dollars' worth of . . . resources" were the freewill offerings voluntarily made available by people who share the ideals and ambitions of the four just men?

It is equally obvious that the public provision of a welfare floor or safety net must involve some restriction of some possible liberties. For there will have to be taxes, that is to say, compulsory exactions, to pay for this too. But these exactions, these restrictions on liberty, will be modest compared with those needed to finance non-selective services available to all without any test of means. Still greater exactions must be required to finance monopoly services; in which the maintenance of the monopoly also itself inevitably involves further and different restrictions on liberty. The uniform monopoly service—admitting no element of consumer choice and hence no possibility of diversity—is at the same time and necessarily both the most constrictive of individual liberties and the most congenial to the ideal of equality of outcome.

It is, therefore, no accident that those who harbour ideals of this sort are forever pressing for always more (and never less) state monopoly in health, education, and welfare services; as well as, for that matter, over "the means of production, distribution, and exchange." Ralph Harris and Arthur Seldon, reviewing the first twenty years of the Institute of Economic Affairs,[22] understood well why every suggestion made by their writers for more *selectivity* and more *choice* in welfare services has run into unrelenting opposition from the Titmuss camp. For, for them, equality and not freedom or even welfare is the name of the game.

Two further observations ought to be made, especially in view of the fact that one party in these disputes is so often supposed both to have all the compassion and to be wholly disinterested. First, a selective welfare system will almost always be cheaper than a non-selective, and a state-floor system cheaper than a state monopoly. So if we admit selectivity and permit choice, we can the more easily afford to provide a higher and more extensive floor. A steady opposition to such selectivity, and still more the opposition to choice, is therefore likely to be motivated by something other than a simple compassionate concern to relieve the most urgent human needs. Secondly, the expansion of non-selective and perhaps

[22] *Not from Benevolence . . .* : 20 *Years of Economic Dissent* (1977), Chapter IV.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ultimately monopoly services provides more scope and more promotion for more social administrators—who then, in turn, strengthen the powerful and effective lobby pressing for still further expansion.

"Who Will Equalise the Equalisers?"

APART FROM WHATEVER PARTICULAR LIMITATIONS of liberty must be essentially involved in any particular programme for compulsory equalisation—or, for that matter, in any programme for compulsory *anything*—there are good general reasons to believe that a strenuous, sustained, and extensive policy for imposing this ideal, especially in those areas which happen to be of most concern to the subjects, will as a matter of fact call for a highly authoritarian and widely repressive form of government.

I have already referred to the case for holding that a fully socialist economy must be, in practice, incompatible with a "Western" democratic political régime, and with those minimum liberties required to make effective elections possible. Now it is precisely such a centralised, socialist, command economy which is necessary in order to make possible—though it alone will certainly not be sufficient to guarantee—the imposition and maintenance of any approved pattern of distribution. This socialist presupposition of the enforcement of "equality and social justice" comes out very clearly in some revealing words of the Chairman of a recent BBC series on *Whatever Happened to Equality?* (words uttered some time before his elevation to a Labour life peerage). He was confronted with:

> "the idea that the state should determine everyone's rewards according to some system of fairness, and should determine prices accordingly . . . this is the acceptance of the view that there is a rational system of social justice which it is the business of the state to enforce."

John Vaizey agreed wholeheartedly:

> "That's a view I should embrace very strongly. I believe that that is the way one ought to think about society."[23]

This confession may be compared with one of the findings of a much recommended sociological study of *Class Inequality and Political Order* (1972). The author, Frank Parkin, seems to be one of those clear-headed and honest socialists who make little or no pretence of being concerned about freedom as well as equality. Parkin concludes:

> "Egalitarianism seems to require a political system in which the state is able to hold in check those social and occupational groups which, by virtue of their skills or education or personal attributes, might otherwise attempt to stake claims to a disproportionate share of society's rewards. The most effective way of holding such groups in check is by denying them the right to organise politically, or in other ways, to undermine social equality. This presumably is the reasoning underlying the Marxist-Leninist case for a political order based upon the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. . . ."

Yet there is a most remarkable, and at the same time most commonplace, deficiency in this conclusion. Nowhere in his whole book does it ever seem to cross Parkin's mind that, even in the somewhat unlikely event that such an uncriticisable and irremovable Power Élite were to subdue all temptations to appropriate massive prerequisites and privileges for its own members, still its absolute power over, and its total control of, the rest of the society must in itself constitute the greatest possible offence to any genuine ideal either of personal equality or even of equality of outcome.

So there is one key question which needs to be pressed and pressed and pressed again, not only against the Leninists but also against all the other, if milder, "engineers of the soul", the whips of compulsory equality. (Leninists are, after all, openly committed to absolute rule by the élite vanguard; and, privately at least, never forget to ask with Lenin "Who/whom?".)

That one key question is: "And who will equalise the equalisers? . . . "

[23] Printed in *The Listener* (London) for 5 May 1974, p. 566.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Soviet Present & Russian Past

By Alain Besançon

TO WHAT EXTENT is it legitimate to evoke Russia's historical past in connection with the Soviet régime?

Between Soviet Russia and its past there are relations of a normal kind and relations of an exceptional kind. What are we to understand by normal relations? A certain number of continuities between the old régime and the new are beyond dispute. The geographical area, with all its special characteristics, the size of the population (in spite of the demographic upheavals produced by the revolutionary events), and even the social groupings remain stable and recognisable elements. The peasantry, the workers, the intelligentsia cannot be liquidated by decree. Normal, too, are researches conducted in a scientific spirit to explain what happened. What elements in the situation of pre-revolutionary Russia made revolution, that particular revolution, probable or possible? An historical theory formulated with a view to answering these questions belongs to the normal type if the Soviet phenomenon is treated like any other phenomenon.

What is exceptional, on the other hand, is a certain type of appeal to history when it comes to judging the significance of the Soviet phenomenon, the invocation of the historical past as witness for the prosecution (or the defence) in a trial where there is no agreement on the facts of the case, on what the Soviet régime actually is in reality, and also the diversity of opinions on the way in which the old and the new régime are linked. I shall briefly examine four types of interpretation; the Soviet, the Trotskyist, the Gaullist, and the Slavophile.

It seems to me that all these interpretations gravely misconstrue a fact which irresistibly asserts itself and which I shall endeavour to elucidate: the peculiar combination of similarities and dissimilarities between the old and the new régime as a result of which no consensus on the Soviet reality has been possible. Of course, to study the Soviet régime in its relations with its past presupposes that one will come to understand its present character all the better.

The End of History

THE OFFICIAL HISTORY of the USSR is subject to what should be called "historiosophy." A historical sequence is predicated, stretching from the earliest origins to the end of time, in which the events of Russian history are lined up and given a fixed meaning; the advent of "socialism" and the defeat of the forces which impeded it. But this official history differs considerably from the Marxist historiosophy which was current under the old régime. Plekhanov concluded from his history of Russia that it would be better, for the Party and everyone else, *not* to take power. Trotsky, who was not in power, could still offer a plausible theory, although a Marxist one, of the Russian Revolution. However schematic he might have been he still maintained contact with reality. There were indeed in Russia: social classes, a weak state, a lost war, and a Bolshevik party.

Things become different when the Bolsheviks have seized power.

For, having seized it in the name of the historiosophy and having founded their *legitimacy* thereon, they must now ensure that it is fulfilled. Socialism in practice must correspond to socialism in theory, of which there existed a precise image, universally known. If they do not correspond, the historiosophy must be wrong—but that would mean the end of legitimacy and, in the long run, of power. Since the image is canonised and the reality follows its own course quite independently, another image of this reality must be provided in order to fill the gap. The Bolsheviks, like the demiurge, hoped to remodel things while keeping their eyes fixed on the socialist idea; but since things refuse to be remodelled, they remodel the representation of things.

So history is rewritten. It is rewritten in the contrasted light of what Papaioannou has called "meta-history" and "sub-history."[1] Meta-history is life becoming "more joyful and gay" each year, as Stalin wrote in 1937. Sub-history means the Hitlero-Trotskyist monsters who perpetrate their heinous crimes by night. If a fissure opens between idea and reality, it rips off the pseudo-historical bandage which covers it. But between meta-history and sub-history, real history disappears.

[1] Kostas Papaioannou, *L'Idéologie froide* (Paris; J. J. Pauvert, 1967), ch. iv.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Four Legends

HOW DO THE RELATIONS between present and past appear in this framework? Logically the justification of the present is carried out by means of four manoeuvres which can be adjusted and combined in all sorts of ways. These are: the legend of the old régime; the legend of the revolution; the legend of the counter-revolution; and the legend of socialism.

The Legend of the Old Régime took some time to crystallise. For some years Soviet historiography continued on the momentum of the old revolutionary critique. So what was offered was the picture of a backward, stagnant Russia, its people in chains. The fiction of the "empty space" enabled the new régime to take the credit for all the economic and cultural capital which survived in spite of it. The image of the Tsarist prisons excused the harshness of socialist methods. However, it was difficult to conceal Russia's pre-War economic progress. In order for there to have been a proletarian revolution, there must have been a proletariat. Above all, nationalism everywhere extolled the work of the Russians and, secondarily, of the Slavs. The Russian contribution to world civilisation had to be magnified to the limit, and the West's influence on Russian culture played down as much as possible. National heroes of foreign origin (such as Chamyl) had to yield the place of honour to unknown champions of "the friendship of the peoples." Several historians who remained faithful *too* long to the black legend of Tsarism paid dearly for it.

The Legend of the Revolution (*i.e.* the seizure of power) is the one that is most subservient to the historiosophical schema. It is a *historia salutis*, a sacred history. The histories of the Bolshevik Party are the manual of initiation and positive theology for the militant. That is why events which appear insignificant even to the historian of these matters are taught across the entire spectrum of the international communist movement—a schism in the Bulgarian party, a fraction among the Armenian Dachnaks, a congress of the Korean or Philippine party. Everything becomes a sort of guide-mark in a secret history—secret in the sense that the archives are under lock-and-key, and in the sense that the various meanings depend on the degree of initiation. The historians are invested with a political responsibility, and their accounts are kaleidoscopically recomposed with the twists and turns of government policy. This history provides the militants with references and terminological notions. For instance, various deviations from the line will be dubbed "Economism" by reference to a notion from the *historia sacra* authenticated by Lenin but, in the opinion of the specialists, corresponding to no definite historical configuration.

The basic theme of the third Legend, that of the Counter-revolution, is that it was always aggressive and coherent. It is in the form of a conspiracy, whether it is called Entente, Imperialism, Fascism, or Bourgeois Nationalism. This conspiracy can be penetrated only by Marxist-Leninist theory and foiled only by the exercise of revolutionary power.

In the fourth Legend, that of Socialism, meta-history predominates. In the table of contents of the classic *History of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R.*(B) the years 1935–37 are summed up thus:

> "Agriculture continues to make great strides. Completion of the second 5-year-Plan ahead of time. Importance of the *cadres*. The Stakhanovite movement. Rise of national prosperity."

However, the sub-history is not far away:

> "Liquidation of the remaining Bukharinists, Trotskyists, spies, saboteurs and traitors to the Fatherland."

But finally:

> "The Party is moving towards a wide measure of internal democracy."

A Double Projection

THUS PAST AND PRESENT are consciously interconnected in Soviet historiography. But the latter is more easily understood if one perceives that it is controlled by an unconscious double projection.

There is the projection on to the past of what pertains to present reality. Thus the old régime is depicted in the likeness of the Stalinist régime. At a time when perhaps a tenth of the population was in prison or concentration camp, there existed an historical review entitled *Katorga i*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ssylka (Prison and Deportation) which listed the ten thousand or so deportees of the nineteenth century. The whole editorial staff had to be deported in order to put a stop to its publication. (At the same time a scholar named Gernet was writing a *History of Tsarist Prisons*, and it appeared in five volumes.)

Then there is the projection on to the adversary of what really applies to oneself. The imperial Petersburgian State, with its bureaucracy and its police, is portrayed in the likeness of the Party which indeed had created itself as "the double" of its own distorted image of the State which it sought to overthrow. Trotskyism or world Zionism become faithful replicas of the real activities of the Comintern projected on to these phantom organisations.

Simultaneously with the expulsion of the bad by means of projection, there is introjection of the good. The new régime appropriates whatever was good and universally recognised as such in the old. Onion-domed churches, Pushkin and Tolstoy, ballet and caviare are wrenched from their historical contexts and become creations of "the Russian people" in so far as it is now represented by the Soviet régime. So that all these good things are credited to the new régime. and preserved to the extent that the latter benefits from their prestige. If an *izba* is gracefully proportioned, it is the creation of the Russian people; if it is full of vermin, it is the creation of capitalism.

I must remark that western opinion has lent itself all too readily to these games of projection and introjection. A French friend once accompanied me to the Bolshoi (built in the 1830s) to see a performance of *Swan Lake* that had been archaeologically exhumed from the Imperial repertoire, with the same costumes and the same décor. He could not suppress a feeling of heartfelt gratitude towards the Soviet régime which had been responsible for such a wonderful evening. Then returning home through the cold and the snow among the drunks and the down-and-outs in Moscow he was overcome with a feeling of sadness for old Russia and said to me: "There is still a lot to be done but they've had such a long way to come. . . ."

A "Distorted" Present

LET US NOW CONSIDER the interpretations of the opponents of the Soviet régime, beginning with the left-wing version.

The quintessence of the left-wing interpretation is to be found in Trotskyism. In 1930, Trotsky writes:

> "Over and above the internal contradictions of capitalism, the October Revolution inherited from old Russia the contradictions, no less profound, between capitalism as a whole and the pre-capitalist forms of production."[2]

This, properly interpreted, means that in Russia, which did not possess an adequate economic base upon which to build socialism, those who hold the reins of power use it to avoid the consequences of scarcity. They become privileged persons. Cut off from the world economy by the policy of "socialism in one country", the parasitic bureaucracy politically dispossesses the proletariat. Thus a Thermidorian process takes shape (after Trotsky's departure) followed by a Bonapartist process with the advent of Stalin.

As an internationalist, blinkered by his theory of permanent revolution, Trotsky is extremely insensitive to the Russian heritage. Essentially he keeps his eye only on the economic aspect, Russia's backwardness. For political precedents he goes back to another past, that of revolutionary France. In this he is European. But a true European would have been struck by what was exclusively Russian in the Stalin régime. In that he does not see this, he is Russian.

His Western disciples are more attentive. Victor Serge wrote in 1937[3]:

> "In the failure of the socialist revolution the influence of old Russia is very great. The factors engendered by its historic formation continue to operate with astonishing power. In the political measures, above all, the continuity is appalling."

And he goes on to cite Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great, and to note how mistrust of the foreigner combined with feverish imitation of the foreigner.

> "The same prisons fulfil the same functions. Monasteries such as those of Suzdal and Solovietski where heretics used to be sent have become 'isolators' for socialist heretics."

Isaac Deutscher, after drawing a Trotskian parallel with the French Revolution, acknowledges that "Napoleon was surrounded by the atmosphere, the glittering colour and elegance of Versailles and Fontainebleau, while the figure of Stalin harmonises with the cruel surroundings of the Kremlin."[4]

However, no Trotskyist can go very far in this direction, in so far as he agrees that the essential point is that an irreversible socialist revolution has occurred in Russia. "It is not enough to betray the Revolution," Trotsky wrote in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937), "it must also

[2] Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution* (London, New Park Publications, 1962), p. 29.
[3] Victor Serge, *Destin d'une révolution* (Paris, Grasset, 1937), p. 315.
[4] Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin* (1967).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be overthrown. Its leaders have betrayed the October Revolution, but they have not yet overthrown it. The Revolution has a great capacity for resistance which coincides with the new relations of ownership, with the living force of the proletariat. . . ."[5] And so on.

Victor Serge emphasised that "the socialised economy, the plan, and the psychological [*sic*] achievement" still remain.[6] According to Deutscher, Stalin was a great revolutionary, like Cromwell and Robespierre. He was with the tide of history—whereas Hitler, poor wretch, was against it. Stalin's work, though it may need "cleansing", retains all its value and must be safeguarded for the future.[7]

The Left sees first and foremost in Soviet Russia a socialism that belongs to no single nation but to humanity as a whole. The Russian past is over. It can do no more than "distort" the present.

A Disguised Past

THE THEME OF THE LEFT is "distortion." The theme of the Right is "disguise." Instead of a socialist reality in Russian trappings, we have a Russian reality in a socialist disguise.

> *"Le 26 novembre nous atterîmes à Bakou. Sur le terrain, ayant écouté les souhaits de bienvenue des autorités soviétiques je reçus le salut et assistai au défilé—baïonnettes basses, torses bombés, pas martelés—d'un très beau détachemente de troupes. C'était bien là l'éternelle armée russe."*
>
> ("On 26 November we landed in Baku. After a welcome by the Soviet authorities, I received a military salute and watched while a splendid detachment of troops—bayonets down, chests out, steps thundering—marched by. Here indeed was the eternal Russian army.")[8]

One recognises the style of General de Gaulle. Apropos of Stalin, the General adds:

> *"Seul en face de la Russie, Staline la vit mystérieuse, plus forte et plus durable que toutes les théories et que tous les régimes. Il l'aima à sa manière. Elle-même l'accepta comme un tsar, pour le temps d'une période terrible et supporta le bolchévisme pour s'en servir comme d'un instrument. Rassembler les Slaves écraser les Germaniques, s'étendre en Asie, accéder aux mers libres, c'étaient les rêves de la patrie, ce furent les buts du despote."*
>
> ("Thenceforth with all Russia in his hands alone, Stalin regarded his country as more mysterious, mightier and more durable than any theory or any régime. He loved it, in his way. Russia herself accepted him as a Tsar during a terrible epoch and tolerated Bolshevism to turn it to her own advantage as a weapon. To unite the Slavs, to overcome the Germans, to expand in Asia, to gain access to ice-free seas—these were the dreams of Mother Russia, these were the despot's goals.")

The Gaullist version shows striking resemblances to the Trotskyist version. Both claim to be liberated from the official mythology. Both reject a part of the reality as being superficial and transitory: the Russian past in one case, the Communist present in the other. There is a "core", and at this core there is Russia, or Socialism. The empirical reality is what must be surmounted in order to reach an essence which is held to be the true reality.

It is not surprising that the two policies based on these symmetrical visions should have met with the most bitter failure. But this failure is incapable of fortifying experience since the dogma provides the means of explaining it away in advance. Each setback, considered in relationship to the progress of the Russian Nation or of Socialism, is dismissed as a fortuitous incident.

MORE SUBTLE is the thinking of the Russian émigrés inspired by the Slavophile tradition. Here Nicolai Berdyaev is typical. From time immemorial, he says, Russia has been apocalyptic and messianic. She has never accepted law, or private property, or humanist and bourgeois individualism in any form. The Marxist myth of the proletariat is the myth of the Russian people resurrected in a new guise. Lenin, by regarding the peasant class as revolutionary and the natural ally of the proletariat, consummated this resurrection. The paradox of Russia's destiny is that:

> "liberal ideas, ideas of law and justice—in a word, reformism—appeared utopian. Bolshevism on the other hand showed itself to be much less utopian, much more realistic, much more in tune with the whole complex situation in Russia in 1917, much more faithful to certain primordial Russian traditions, to the Russian quest for universal social justice, understood in a maximalist sense, and to the Russian method of government and control by coercion."

Berdyaev goes on to argue:

> "The old consecrated Russian Empire fell and a new one was formed, also a consecrated empire, an inverted theocracy. Marxism, itself so un-Russian in origin and character, assumed a Russian style, an oriental style approaching Slavophilism. Even the old Slavophile dream of transferring the capital from St. Petersburg to Moscow, to the Kremlin, was realised by the Red Communists, and Russian Communism proclaimed anew the old idea of the Slavophiles and Dostoevsky—*ex Oriente lux*."[9]

---

[5] Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937).
[6] Victor Serge, *Destin d'une revolution*, p. 322.
[7] Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin*.
[8] Charles de Gaulle, *War Memoirs*, Vol. III (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1960).
[9] Nicolai Berdyaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism* (1937), pp. 134, 170.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Here, once more, the complicity between Slavophile thought and Revolutionary thought is revealed. They are distinguished only by a change of sign. "The mission of the Russian people", writes Berdyaev, "is the realisation of social justice in human society, not only in Russia but in the whole world." The Bolshevik State goes about it by unjust ways. But it preserves both the idea of the Russian nation—wherefore Bolshevism, however demoniacal it may be, is of a superior essence to the flat dullness of the bourgeois West—and the very existence of Holy Russia. "The Soviet government is the only power that provides some sort of defence for Russia against the dangers which threaten her."

Berdyaev's view coincides exactly with the practical positions taken up by Trotsky at the same time: the Soviet State must be defended at all costs as the tabernacle of Russia or as the fortress of the proletariat. Slavophile apocalypticism becomes almost indistinguishable from Bolshevik catastrophism.

A Prophetic Nightmare

THIS BRIEF REMINDER of the dominant historical interpretations has not brought us one step nearer the fact which prompted our inquiry and of which they are false explanations: that any history of old Russia reminds us strikingly and inescapably of the Russia of today. "It's still the same", and "It was always like that"—these are the two inevitable and naïve reactions which must be explained. Let us look at Custine in his famous *La Russie en 1839*:

> "The Russians would not forgo the marvels of will-power of which they are the witnesses, accomplices, and victims, even if it meant bringing back to life all the slaves these marvels have cost."

> "The Russians readily make saints of their heroes. They delight in confounding the terrible virtues of their masters with the beneficent power of their patron saints and endeavour to cover the cruelties of history with the cloak of faith."

Or again, in a minor vein:

> "We suffer from the weakness of gossip, they enjoy the strength of secrecy: therein lies their cleverness."

> "They refuse you nothing, but they accompany you everywhere: politeness here becomes a means of surveillance."

> "The practice of mystifying strangers is known only in Russia."

And so on. One could cover whole pages with quotations like these, some touching on the first principles of despotism, others on details of day-to-day life in Russia such as police surveillance, the chaotic minuteness of administration, the all-pervasive smell of stale cabbage. Anthologies of Custine have been compiled which have reinforced the Gaullist illusion that nothing has changed.[10]

But this is another illusion. Custine's book is not a true investigation: it is a prophetic nightmare. His description is partial; he did not see what lay outside the sphere of governmental despotism, what was indeed in the process of reacting against it in the form of Russian culture. He even misjudged the limits of this despotism, which were very real in a traditionalist Christian country which had taken its models from the West. His description is also biased because exaggerated. Moreover it was quickly out-dated. Custine knew the Russian State. He had an intuitive vision of the Russian revolutionary, rootless, ignorant and fanatical, and of the despotism he would install. But, perhaps because of the influence of the Catholic thought of de Maistre (and of the Poles), he was unaware of the existence of a third force, the genuine power of Russian liberalism under its Westernised forms—the "Kadets" and the Social-Democrats.

In 1914 Russia bears scarcely any resemblance to *Russia in 1839*. Leroy-Beaulieu and Wallace, who then described Russian "self-government", semi-parliamentarism, mass education and the press do not mention his name. At that time Custine was no more than a curiosity.

But then, as George Kennan judiciously remarks, "Even if we admit that *La Russie en*

[10] See: *Journey for Our Time: Journals of the Marquis de Custine* (tr. Phyllis Kohler, 1951), with a preface by General Walter Bedell Smith.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1839 was not a very good book about Russia in 1839, we are confronted with the disturbing fact that it was an excellent book, probably in fact the best of books, about the Russia of Joseph Stalin, and not a bad book about the Russia of Brezhnev and Kosygin."[11] How did a book that was false in 1839 become true in 1939?

The Reanimation of Archaisms

IT IS AS THOUGH the old history of Russia had risen from the dead, but disfigured by its long sojourn in the tomb. The Soviet régime has brought about a reanimation of the archaisms of Russian history which Custine had sensed and which on the eve of the 1917 Revolution had been in the process of resorption. Not all of history is subject to this reawakening to the same extent. But the great classical landmarks of Russian history find an apparent equivalent in contemporary history.

Soviet ritualism has often been likened to the book of ceremonial of the sacred palace. Byzantine monism (the confusion of spiritual and temporal power) finds a sort of equivalent in the reign of the theorist dictator. The Mongols provide precedents for the cruelty, for the "Asiatic despotism" of Lenin and his successors. Ivan III's Muscovy offers (in the ideology of "the Third Rome") an early blueprint for Soviet messianism. Ivan the Terrible provides the model for the bloody and absurd purges which destroy whole classes, atomise society, and ruin the country. Peter the Great is the first rough sketch for authoritarian modernisation, Westernisation by non-Western means, the substitution of State coercion for the mechanism of the market, the utilisation of archaisms for military competitive ends. The astute diplomacy of St Petersburg, the imperialism disguised as "Slav solidarity", corrupting the foreign press, squeezing money from Russia's allies, creating a network of spies and propagandists—all this seems to have been maintained without the slightest break in continuity.

But here, too, we must be on our guard. We must ask ourselves if these alleged precedents are not distorted by retrospective projections of the Soviet world on to the past. The comparison is unfair to Byzantium, where the spiritual and the temporal were never confused to the same degree as in Russia and where in any case the spiritual did exist. It is unfair, too, to the Mongols, who were an admirable people with a sense of justice and honour. In the 16th century Ivan Peresvetov wrote that "if Russia could only supplement her Christian faith with Tartar justice", she would be blessed with a visitation of angels.[12] And it is also unfair to the Petersburgian State, which proved capable of reforming itself and of promoting a considerable advance in culture, prosperity, and liberty. Moreover, the resemblance between one period and another does not imply transmission, and until this has been proved, the notion of precedent must be used with caution.

A Repository of Dead Forms

HOWEVER, THERE ARE two points to be made at this stage. Even assuming that the phenomena are of the same kind, there is a vast difference of degree between them. There can be no comparison between the building of St Petersburg and that of the Stalinist *combinats*, any more than between the Peter and Paul fortress and the Gulag Archipelago. If history has repeated itself, it is in the opposite sense from the Marxian formula: the subsequent tragedy makes the prototype look like an amiable farce.

Secondly, the phenomena which reappear in this brutal and exaggerated form all belong to the sphere of the State and government; whereas what formed the living tissue of civil society, customs, habits, style of life, still survives, but in a totally different way.

Russian national life survives, but either in decay or artificially preserved in an etiolated and sterilised form. Russia possesses the last traditional peasantry of Europe, but it is a pauperised peasantry, stuck in its rotting *izbas*, restored to a kind of serfdom without laws, in communities without *mirs*, in villages without fêtes and without churches. It possesses the last proletariat *à la* Zola or *à la* Gorki, drunken and oafish. But, as Vassily Grossman's worker-hero says: "I ask you, what is a worker without the right to strike?"[13]

Since the springs have dried up, Soviet Russia has become a repository of dead forms. Everything that has not perished is enclosed in a necropolis, a museum, where the same vaguely Chekhovian novel is indefinitely reprinted, where Tchaikovsky is churned out mechanically, where the nationalist and social-realist painting of the 1880s is endlessly copied. This is also true of social *mores*, and of what remains of political life in civil society. The picture which Andrei Amalrik paints of the opposition[14] shows it cast in the same moulds which it had assumed in

[11] George Kennan, *The Marquis de Custine and his Russia in 1839* (1971), p. 124.
[12] A. V. Soloviev, *Holy Russia* (1959), p. 24.
[13] Vassily Grossman: *Tout Passe* (Paris, Stock, 1972), p. 127.
[14] Andrei Amalrik, *Will the Soviet Union Survive until 1984?* (1970).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the 19th century, and all of them—Slavophilism, Westernism, Liberalism, Socialism—are represented. Now, as then, the eponymous hero of national life is embodied in the Writer; religious life is divided between the ritualism of an enslaved church and the formless mysticism of a multitude of sects.

A superficial vision fails to discriminate between these two modes of existence of old Russia, the ostentatious revival of all the historic forms of power and the fragile and mummified survival of the rest. Since everything appears to be in place, it is the Right-wing vision which seems the correct one, and hence it is the one that is adopted by those Western diplomats who pride themselves on their knowledge of history. But it is the subtlest of illusions to believe that Russia has simply been preserved as it was. Bolshevism is not a mere resurgence of the abolished past, nor a mere freezing of history; it is the "pseudo-morphosis" of it, or more precisely the *perversa imitatio*. This is what I still wish to show.

The Rejected Heritage

LOOKED AT FROM the outside, the Leninist régime seems to offer a synthesis of the three main currents which, originating under Nicholas I, never ceased to inform the subsequent political life of Russia. (1) It inherited the Westernising tradition: the aspiration towards enlightenment, education, reason, organisation. Left-wing Westernism is still discernible in Leninist scientism, in the attribution of an ethical value to revolutionary action. (2) At the same time it inherited a large part of the Slavophile tradition; the idea of community, the messianic idea, contempt for the corrupt West, compensatory nationalism. (3) Finally, it inherited official nationalism, that is to say the doctrine of the Petersburgian State. As Herzen said of the latter, the Party camped in Russia like an army of occupation in a conquered country.

Now that "socialism" was established, it claimed, like the old *vneklasovyj* Russian State, to be "above class." The whole of Russian history seemed to have been taken over by Bolshevism. This is why it was always favourably regarded by the parties which it ousted, not only because of nationalism but because, from Brussilov to Martov, they somehow had the impression that it was carrying out their programme. But now this heritage was rejected by its beneficiary. From the outside the synthesis seemed to have been accomplished; but from the inside it was repudiated.

Being Marxist, Leninism could never admit the slightest affinity with Slavophilism. It eliminated Westernism from its liberal component, which incidentally involved expurgating Marx of his intermittent liberalism. Finally, it turned upside down the trilogy of official nationalism: democracy instead of autocracy, atheism instead of orthodoxy, internationalism instead of nationalism. True, it assumed the responsibilities of office—Stalin observed that the Soviet State was much stronger than the "bourgeois", that is to say Tsarist, State. But the new State was deemed democratic in its principles and communist in its aims: absolute freedom in absolute abundance.

When did this "negation in appropriation" arise? It arose from the combination, peculiar to Leninism, of a utopia claiming to conform to the scientifically established order of the universe and a policy designed to achieve it. The Leninist idea was that it was only necessary to overcome a few political obstacles for history spontaneously and freely to take the course which the theory assigned to it. In this sense Leninism appeared to be a sort of "deferred liberalism" since it would only require an initial reshuffling of the elements for a *laissez faire, laissez passer* that would confirm the theory to emerge triumphant. No dictatorship has ever been as sincerely provisional as that of the Bolsheviks in 1917.

Unfortunately, as we know, Utopia did not spontaneously come into being after the seizure of power. On the contrary, the only spontaneity of which the historical raw material gave evidence was to resist with all its strength and to set off obstinately in the opposite direction to the one foreseen. At this point ideological dictatorships usually lost their hold on power. But for the first time in history, the Bolsheviks retained it. Everything has flowed from this.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Madman & the Ideologue

IN EFFECT, having failed to influence reality, they retained the possibility of influencing the representation of reality. It was thus that they entered the world of falsehood and, in the context which concerns us here, historical falsehood. History was immediately annihilated by sub-history and meta-history. This was only a part of the more general process of linguistic perversion. Language, normally used to convey truth, or at least to communicate, was now employed for power-political ends, that is to say magical ends. Not for nothing did Stalin define the writer as "the engineer of souls." Was it a piece of sophistry, an incantation? No, because the incantation (or the sophistry) presented itself as such, and neither Lenin or Stalin could have borne to be caught *in flagrante delicto* mouthing magic formulas. The natural comparison, to which the Russians have always had recourse, is with *la folie*.

The madman is one who under the threat of internal forces—which he himself feels as external—instead of remoulding external reality arbitrarily remoulds his perception of it. In remoulding his outlook he remoulds himself, and in asserting a dictatorship over the new self congeals into a block that is incapable of evolution. In this way he hopes to keep the enemy at bay. The remoulding of reality, but without knowing what reality is, and thus involving a loss of contact with reality—this is what is common to the madman and the ideologue in power.

True, there are differences in kind, in etiology, in symptom, between psychotic madness and ideological madness, and in particular this: the psychotic cannot take his arbitrary remoulding of imaginary reality and personal reality very far. As soon as he becomes dangerous to himself and others, he is usually locked up by order of the law. Bolshevism, on the other hand, possesses the most powerful of instruments of action over reality: the modern State. What does it do with it?

First of all, it maintains the inevitable course of the ideology. The ideology can in a certain sense be envisaged as an "artefact" which permanently blocks a return to reality, which prevents, as it were, a reawakening. The ideological language, by ensuring the immediate interpretation of anything that may occur, reduces the pressure of reality, keeps projections at bay, excuses murder, preserves the position of the dream in the heart of reality, continuously legitimises the actions of the State. The State, in imposing the ideology, protects the madness.

James Fenton

writes . . .

'Speaking at a meat-processing factory in Dyce during her recent, and apparently not very successful, Scottish tour, Mrs Thatcher told the management: "My family love sausages. That sort of food is ideal for a person who lives the kind of life I do." This is the new Mrs Thatcher – soft, sexy, sausage-scoffing, sensitive to the hopes and aspirations of those she meets. In another context, for instance in her own constituency, she might have kept the sausages under her hat. But up in Aberdeenshire (or down in Aberdeenshire, if you insist) she was at liberty to reveal all. I imagine that Gordon Reece, the EMI executive who has been hired as her image-builder, and who was with her on the trip, would have been proud of the effort. "Listen, darling," I can hear him saying it, "you've got to *think sausage*. You've got to *ooze* with sausage-appeal. You've got to get inside the skin of it – you've got to be every inch a sausage." And Mrs Thatcher obliged.'

James Fenton writes on politics every week in the

NEW STATESMAN

in company with many other writers of wit and distinction. This could be *your* kind of reading. Why not try it with an introductory subscription? New subscribers get 15 per cent discount.

Annual Subscriptions

	Full rate	Introductory
UK	£12.50	**£10.60**
USA, Canada	$40.00	**$34.00**
Europe	£17.50	**£14.80**
Middle East	£19.00	**£16.10**
Africa, India	£20.00	**£17.00**
Australia, NZ Far East	£21.00	**£17.80**

You may pay by sterling or dollar cheque or by International Money Order

Please send your name and address with payment to:

DEPT EN, NEW STATESMAN
Great Turnstile, London WC1, England

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A State without a Society

AT THE SAME TIME the State endeavours to bring the whole of the social reality into the sphere of its power. It breaks down the resistance of reality, which it perceives semi-psychotically as a plot on the part of White Guards, Trotskyists, Zionists, Imperialists, etc., by providing a political solution for the whole complex of insoluble problems. This assimilation of the whole of social and cultural life into politics was summed up in 1934 by Stalin in this Tacitean phrase: "There is nothing left to prove and no one left to beat."

Thus the State is delirious in its ends and in its representations, but it is rational in the means and policies employed to preserve and expand its power. Its very expansion is in direct proportion to the emptiness or the unreality of the programme. The absorption of civil society thus becomes a substitute for the impossibility of realising the utopia. To a degree hitherto unknown, the State substitutes itself for a civil society incapable of accomplishing what is expected of it. Therein, to my mind, lies the key to the historical paradoxes which unite and divide the USSR and the old Russian Empire.

Civil society is maimed. Reduced and constricted by the expansion of the State's sphere of action, stupefied by ideological incarceration, decimated by the periodical massacres dictated by the Party's paranoia, it is incapable of producing an art that is not an art of protest, an original economy or a style of life of its own. For this reason, it seems to me equivocal to speak of an "Industrial Society" in connection with Soviet society, not because there is no industry but because there is no society, that is to say, a community of men between whom there exist organised relations and reciprocal services. The State has taken all this in hand. Society leads the diminished existence of a shade in Hades, similar in outline to what it was in the daylight of the old régime, but deprived of the colour of blood and the warmth of life. At best, it is in a state of hibernation. There is one exception, however: everything in civil society which serves as a reservoir for State power—the Army, nationalism, military technology—spreads like a cancerous growth.

In these circumstances, what is likely to become of the State? Having imposed the fiction that the reality already tallies with the utopian ideal, it endeavours to make it tally in actual fact. To do this it has only one concrete model (having annihllated internal spontaneity), and that is the West. So its programme is "catch up and overtake." But the coercive mode of the imitation makes it impracticable. The more Soviet Russia imitates the West externally, the less it resembles it internally. The State cannot substitute itself for the inert Russian society in order to imitate the spontaneous development of another society. Moreover, it imitates it not in order to resemble it, but in order to realise utopia; in other words, it wants to be at once the West and its opposite. In this sense, the USSR can only be the synthetic and unreal replica of the West, its *Golem*.

A Perverse Imitation

BUT, AS REGARDS THE FORM, the Soviet State has no foreign model. No other State, Eastern or Western, has ever had such an aim or such a function. In the history of Russia, on the other hand, it finds a rich panoply of absolute power. Byzantine ritualism, Mongol cruelty, 16th-century messianism, Petrine voluntarism, Petersburgian imperialism offer a whole string of recipes and forms ready-made for re-employment. As we have seen, since the beginning of Russia there has been no historical permanence, no continuity or tradition, but a catalogue of spent forms waiting to be seized upon for quite other ends. Why did the new State seize upon them?

In the first place, they provided it with an extra legitimacy in addition to its ideological legitimacy. The new State posed as the heir of the old. As it developed it rehabilitated the great despotic figures of the past: Peter the Great at the time of Lenin, Ivan the Terrible under Stalin. Lately it has allowed churches to be restored and icons to be worshipped to the extent that a whiff of Orthodox incense has always impregnated the sombre liturgies of the Russian State.

Besides, these forms were already pre-adapted to the exercise of absolute power. True, no Russian State has ever had the unreal and unlimited ambitions—unlimited because unreal—of the new one. Hence these forms have been distorted to the point of caricature. It was

RESEARCH CONSULTANTS
Leading academics
RESEARCH ASSISTANTS
Experienced honours graduates
TRANSLATORS
Qualified, most European languages
ARCHIVISTS
Try our range of services, sources and subjects
Research Assistance Routledge Associates
25 Woodhayes Road, London SW19
Phone 01-947 5614

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

because it was a caricature that Custine's picture proved a good likeness a century later.

The fact remains that development through coercion—and the substitution of the State for civil society—constituted the historical originality of Russia. Perhaps it would be appropriate here to examine the pertinence of the concept of "pseudo-morphosis" invented by Spengler precisely in connection with old Russia.

> "By the term 'historical pseudo-morphosis' I propose to designate those cases in which an older, alien culture lies so massively over the land that a young culture, born in this land, cannot get its breath and fails not only to achieve pure and specific expression-forms, but even to develop fully its own self-consciousness. All that wells up from the depths of the young soul is cast in the old alien moulds." (*The Decline of the West*)

Does this apply to the Russian case? It is more complicated than that. Instead of a spontaneous development in borrowed forms, it is the State that has concocted the successive moulds—based on Byzantium, the empire of the Steppes, the monarchies of Central Europe—and it is the State that has forced the passive and reluctant human material into these moulds. Thus the authoritarian mode of the imitation deflected the Russian pseudo-morphosis towards a "perverse imitation." The result was Byzantium minus high Christianity, the Mongol empire minus law and honour, Western monarchy minus property and liberty. The imitation was always poisoned by jealousy and hatred and (to quote Spengler) "instead of rearing itself up in its own creative power, it can only hate the distant power with a hate that grows to be monstrous."

But in imitating the West in a desperate attempt to give its utopia some solidity, the Soviet State has pushed resentment to the point where it cannot recognise that it is imitating its enemy. In this it is the absolute revolution, and it will never rest until it has annihilated its model. On the other hand, in imitating and caricaturing the historic forms of Russian despotism, it condemns itself to being at best the pseudo-morphosis of a pseudo-morphosis. In this it is absolute conservatism.

Thus we are faced with a strange State, at once omnipotent and without real consistency, a State which, even more than in the time of Karl Marx, "even after achievements on a world scale, never ceases to be considered as an affair of belief and not of fact."[15] But it is the Communist utopia which is responsible for this situation. The Gaullist error is to ascribe to the visible forms of the State the value and the limits which they had under the old régime. The Slavophile error is to attribute to the old social and cultural forms a vitality which they have lost. If my reasoning is correct, it is when the USSR most resembles Russia and seems to take on the lineaments of eternity that it is most revolutionary and must be treated as a Communist power.

Postscript

1. My reasoning rests on a distinction between two ways of preserving the past which have been confused in other theories: between the forms of government revived and developed by the new State with a view to achieving its ideological/utopian aims and the forms of civil society which survive in a maimed and sterilised form. Can the theory be applied in other situations besides the Russian? At first sight yes. Prussianism in the DDR or imperial ceremonial in China seem to stand in the same relationship to the communist régime as Czarism in the Soviet Union.

2. Tocqueville observed that the Revolution had brought to fulfilment the centralising tendency of the *Ancien Régime*. He saw in the *préfet* the obvious heir to the *intendant*. However, he would have been unable to observe the same continuity between the *intendant* and Carrier, who drowned people under his jurisdiction, or Fouché who shot them.

For a continuity to appear the utopian ends must have been abandoned. Only a restoration, therefore (Napoleonic or royal), makes it possible for the revolution to be fitted into a continuity. But no Bolshevik revolution has yet been followed by a restoration.

[15] Karl Marx, *La Russie et l'Europe* (Paris, Gallimard, 1954).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THE MARGIN

Solzhenitsyn's Children?

By Melvin J. Lasky

I ATTENDED a conference at the University of Würzburg, and the theme set (in a burst of Bavarian cosmopolitanism) was the dramatic break of the young French school of writers called the "Nouveaux Philosophes" from the orthodoxies of the militant 1960s. The German academic world, wallowing in a surfeit of late-Marxism-Leninism, is on a sharp hopeful lookout for something they call a *Tendenzende*, or a change in the *Zeitgeist*. Perhaps there were implications for Germany and the whole Western scene in the latest Parisian intellectual fashion. Had not *Time* magazine given them a cover-story and pronounced the new philosophers to be "on the same wave-length" as (President) Jimmy Carter and (California Governor) Jerry Brown?

Alas, none of these charming and brilliant young Frenchmen turned up to speak on their own behalf. Invitations had been extended; but one was on a lecture tour, another was appearing on television, a third was busy demonstrating for some new personalist, non-Marxist cause, and a fourth was trapped by fog at Orly. It is not easy to make contact with *nouveaux philosophes* nowadays—ideologues are simply stars in Paris, their books become best-sellers, their youthful good looks are on the screen every night. They appear to have more in common with the tradition of Gérard Philippe than of Jean-Paul Sartre.

So the discussion went on for two days without the French witnesses themselves, but their presence was sharply felt for all that. It is true, as François Bondy pointed out (who else has read, and made marginal notes, on every page of the works of Andre Glucksmann, Bernard-Henri Lévy, Jean-Marie Benoist *et. al.*?), that this was not really philosophy and there was little new in it. But nowhere else in the Western cultural world had the generation of 1968, full of utopian dreams and revolutionary gestures, looked back on its own illusions, critically, honestly. Solzhenitsyn's books had hit them like a bomb. Was it for a Gulag Archipelago that they had been lending their idealism? The sudden awareness of the deceit and emptiness of their Jacobin rhetoric desolated them; they pronounced Marx to be dead; they sought personal, more liberal, more realistic ways to realise social ideals. As Bondy argued, we may have heard it all before, but where else have the young militants of '68—only yesterday they were "demanding the impossible"—confessed to the error of their ways?

But for Wolfgang Leonhard, who studies with Mommsen-like scholarship the factions and defections of Eastern Marxists, these French *philosophes* were only the latest graduates in an old European school of Leftist disillusionment with the Bolshevik Revolution, the Soviet deformation of socialism, and the totalitarian potential of Marxist-Leninist theory. With a precise historical intimacy which was worthy of a Plutarch, he gave us a chronicle of heroical heretics (Russians, Poles, Chinese, Yugoslavs, Czechs, and last but not least Germans: from Karl Korsch to Robert Havemann) who tried to find their way out of totalitarian doctrines to some kind of more libertarian and pluralist socialism, all with some feature of a "more human face." It was quite complete, I thought, except for the drama of Leonhard himself:[1] the young German anti-Nazi who comes back from Moscow with Ulbricht in 1945, realises that Stalin has betrayed Lenin, begins to suspect that Tito might not be a traitor, moves towards Social Democracy, and finally becomes Yale University's resident scholar on ideological apostasy.

WERE, THEN, the French new philosophers, who have been giving intellectual trouble to both François Mitterrand and Jean-Paul Sartre, a peculiarly Paris phenomenon? The Germans in Würzburg were hard put to find any German parallel. Who could dare to imagine hearing from Hans Magnus Enzensberger or a Rudi Dutschke (and who cares what Tariq Ali thinks, in Putney or in Pakistan?) that they had been seriously mistaken, that they had seen the error of their ways, that their utopias and revolutions had been vapid and wrong-headed chimera?

I myself was hard put to find any Anglo-American parallels. One could only work through the familiar context: that neither in Britain nor in the USA had there been a Marxist-theoretical tradition on the Left, that English-speaking socialists and militants are more pragmatic, less infatuated with ideas and ideologies. But Professor Lothar Bossle's assembled trend-spotters of his *Institut für Demokratieforschung*

[1] His memoirs were entitled *Child of the Revolution* (1957); among his other books is *Three Faces of Marxism* (1970).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were eager to see the outlines of a *Tendenzwende* which would give a new sobriety to the Western mind. They spotted the case of Paul Johnson, whose tall red-haired figure had been full of Byronic excitement in the Sorbonne enthusiasm of '68, and who had now published in the left-wing *New Statesman* (of which he had been *Chefredakteur*) a "Farewell" to his ideologised illusions (and expanded his "recantation" in his book called *Enemies of Society*). And even in America there was at least one moving case of disenchantment and disillusionment: none other than Eldridge Cleaver, once the poet of Black Power, and now a chastened liberator, embittered by his experiences in Cuba and Africa amongst revolutionaries with inhuman faces, and author of a sequel to *Soul on Ice* (1969) called *Soul on Fire* (1978), for he has now lost his Black Power cool and is burning for democratic and religious values.

PERHAPS there was hope. I was rather cheered by the two days of extraordinary debate in the rococo *Residenz*, and surely it must only be here in this University (and not in Berlin, or Bremen, or Heidelberg, or Marburg) that one could hold a seminar on problems of the Marxist Left without being interrupted, insulted, and routed. By the time we were finished—with, appropriately, a moving tribute to Raymond Aron (no *nouveaux philosophe* he, but an old stalwart democratic spirit who had always kept the faith without illusions)—there appeared to be the outlines of a new realism on the international ideological scene.[2]

One participant was more elated than all the others. He was Professor Hellmut Nitsche, who had spent most of the year in an East Berlin prison. He had been arrested on vague charges of "dissidence", and threatened with a ten-year sentence when he refused to "confess." His wife was arrested for harbouring "secret manuscripts" on human rights questions. Their two small children were to be sent to an "orphanage" and then put into the new-style compulsory adoption system. But he had indeed written an open letter to President Carter, and rather than go through the whole *Menschenrechte* quarrel again just before Belgrade, the East Germans expelled the whole Nitsche family to the *Bundesrepublik*.

So there he sat, wide-eyed, open-eared. It was for him, as he remarked to me, an instant briefing, *ein Schnellkurs*, in the problems of Left and Right, free from Party censors and secret-police surveillance. Could it truly be that one could really discuss—and argue, and disagree—without rancour and danger? For the first time in his life he spoke his mind freely, and he was beginning to feel "at home" in the West.

[2] See, in ENCOUNTER (September 1977), Leopold Labedz, "Raymond Aron's 'Vindication.'"

The Murder of Andres Nin

IT WAS a valuable point that Professor Hugh Thomas made in his critique of Santiago Carrillo's "Euro-Communism" (ENCOUNTER, October) when he raised the question of the historic Party attitude towards Andres Nin, his murder, and the whole suppression of the POUM on alleged "pro-Nazi" charges.

We now have some additional light thrown on the subject by the publication of a documentary article in the Madrid magazine *Cambio 16*. The author is Xavier Gimenez, the only surviving member of a "Special Brigade" in the Civil War of 1936–39, a unit which had been established by the Soviet secret police and was under the control of GPU officers. The general suspicion had, until now, been that Nin, the leader of the "Trotskyite" POUM (and, among other foreigners, George Orwell was with the POUM), had been murdered by Russian and Spanish Communists in Spain. But, according to Gimenez, he had been taken to Moscow and liquidated there.

The GPU offensive against the "dissenters" and "heretics" on the Left was, of course, run by the notorious Alexander Orlow. In the vicious ideological fashion of those days anybody who disagreed with the Party line was "objectively" working for the enemy and, when the controversy got hot, even "subjectively" in his pay. As Carrillo confesses, "there was a time in which Communists were profoundly convinced that Trotsky and Trotskyism had transformed themselves into agents of Nazism. . . ." Hugh Thomas says this is "very honest" of Carrillo—but what a comment on the nature of "profound convictions" in the Communist movement! And what a blunt and primitive and manipulable instrument scientific Marxism turns out to be when it cannot induce even a bit of healthy scepticism about such convenient political transformations!

According to Gimenez, the GPU—following the model of the Moscow evidence in Stalin's "Show Trials"—fabricated the documents and forged Nin's signature. The phoney documents were then published in the Communist press. One of the key men in the operation was Alberto Castilla, a very skilful Basque adventurer, who

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

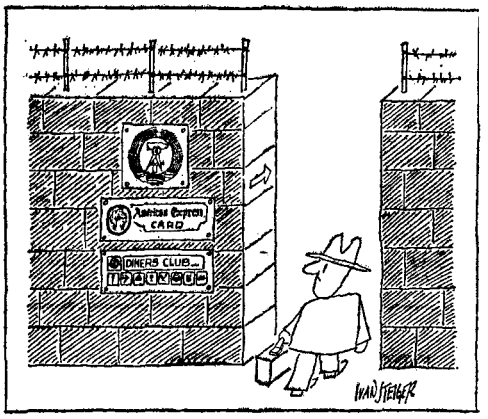
also played a role (for the GPU) among the so-called "Fifth Columnists" on whom Franco was depending for support behind the Republican lines. It was Castilla who planted the documents among the Fifth Columnists, and when some 300 of them were picked up in a raid the "evidence" against Nin was "discovered." Nin himself was arrested in Barcelona, and then taken to a GPU safe house in Alcalá near Madrid. The story thereafter was put about that he had been "liberated" by a fascist group. And Carrillo, as Hugh Thomas notes, had already revised his views about this in his earlier book, *Demain Espagne* (written when he was still in exile in France). "[Nin] was assassinated and did not try and flee to the enemy camp. . . ."

The fact of the matter, according to Gimenez, is that the "Special Brigade" took Nin to Valencia, and he was then transported to the USSR on board a Soviet ship. His whole account[3] is now likely to intensify the criticism which the Spanish Communists have been taking for their slow (if undeniable) steps forward towards recognising the ugly record of murder and falsification which marks the whole history of the Third International.

Commentators are wondering whether Communists like Carrillo can become "Social Democrats"—you'd think they'd be only too eager to, tomorrow, immediately, in order to escape the shame of ever having been a Stalinoid Communist!

[3] There is a detailed summary of the "Cambio 16" article by Xavier Gimenez from the Madrid correspondent of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ, 8 October, p. 6). More recently the European press has given summaries of the "charges of Stalinism" against Carrillo preferred by the Spanish novelist (and dissident Communist) Jorge Semprun, a theme to which we shall be returning.

Slave Trade



Bonn

PRESSED *for hard foreign currency to help meet huge international trading debts, the East German Government is stepping up its sales of political prisoners to Bonn.*

The East-West trade in political prisoners began back in 1962 and is now a standard item in East German state accounting.

The Communists have also raised their head-price. The average cost per prisoner used to be £10,000. Now it is about £12,500.

The "bodies for cash" deals have so far cost the West German taxpayer nearly £250 million though not all of it in direct payments.

A total of about 8,000 prisoners have been bailed-out by Bonn since the trade started. But, according to a West German human rights group called "13 August" (for the date the Berlin Wall went up in 1961), the East Germans have plenty more where they came from.

A group spokesman said: "There are now about 6,000 East Germans behind bars for political reasons. We expect many of them to be sold to the West in the coming months."

John England
in the DAILY TELEGRAPH

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Bert Brecht, Sidney Hook, & Stalin

I AM SOMEWHAT SURPRISED to find that Mr Martin Esslin holds (ENCOUNTER, December 1977) the bizarre view that when Bertold Brecht replied, in answer to my criticism of Stalin's arrest of Zinoviev and other old Bolsheviks in 1935,

> "The more innocent they are, the more they deserve to be shot",

he intended this as an expression of hostility to Stalin, as a rebuke to Stalin's victims for not having succeeded in eliminating Stalin.

I call this view, originally promulgated by Hannah Arendt, bizarre because at that time Brecht was a passionate and uncritical admirer of the Soviet leadership. To be sure, Brecht was not politically orthodox. From the time I met him at Karl Korsch's lectures in Berlin in 1929 (and subsequently in the United States), he was savagely and often comically critical of the German Communist Party and the American Communist Party; but as if to atone for this, he never uttered a word of protest in my hearing about Soviet policy or events in the Soviet Union. Shortly before Brecht's last visit to me, even Karl Korsch, who had sought to explain away Brecht's glorification of Stalinist Russia as privileged by the poet's *Narrenfreiheit*, complained to me that "Brecht is going too far."

Brecht repeated his sentence twice before I showed him the door. Since he was perfectly aware of my sentiments about Stalin, *had he intended by his words to express his hostility to Stalin*, he would certainly have demurred or requested an explanation when I handed him his hat and coat. He left without a word and without finishing his drink. Brecht's unqualified endorsement of the Moscow Trials, from which I quote a few lines, is additional evidence that Hannah Arendt's reading of his words is arbitrary and far-fetched:

> "Even in the opinion of the bitterest enemies of the Soviet Union and of her Government, the trials have clearly demonstrated the existence of active conspiracies against the régime, and the responsibility of these conspiratorial caucuses both for sabotage at home and for certain negotiations with Fascist diplomats regarding the attitudes of their governments towards a possible change of régime in the Soviet Union. . . .
>
> "We must try to discern behind the actions of the accused what was to them a conceivable political conception—a conception which led them into a quagmire of infamous crimes. . . . This false political conception led them into the depths of isolation and deep into infamous crime. All the scum, domestic and foreign, all the vermin, the professional criminals and informers, found lodging here. The goals of all this rabble were identical to the goals of the accused. I am convinced that this is the truth, and I am convinced that it will carry the ring of truth even in Western Europe, even for hostile readers."[1]

Whatever may have been his feelings and judgment subsequently, and there is no evidence that he ever altered them, there was nothing "ambiguous" or "ironical" about Brecht's remark at the time he made it. What he was saying to me was clear enough: regardless of the guilt or innocence of the accused with respect to any specific charge, they deserved to die because they were in opposition to Stalin and his policies. Brecht always refused to dissociate the rule of Stalin from the defence and survival of the Soviet State.

SIDNEY HOOK

Stanford, California

[1] *"Über die Moskauer Prozesse"*, in *Gesammelte Werke 20* (Suhrkamp, 1967), Band 20, pp. 111 ff. The translation is by Peter and Betty Ross.

The Arts Council Debate

POOR OLD ARTS COUNCIL! After suffering the slings and arrows of outrageous Fuller, it now gets a pasting from Ronald Harwood [ENCOUNTER, January] in his most alarmist form: "disease . . . a more terrifying diagnosis . . . little short of disgraceful . . . all ills fed by this cancer." And what is the nature of his complaint? That there is only one practising artist among the 20 members of the Council: "the Arts Council fails to maintain standards of excellence because the present bunch would not know excellence from margarine."

Stirring words, but rubbish. As a colleague of Harwood's on the Literature Panel, I can testify to the fact that he is one of the most admirably forthright and constructive members of that Panel, as well as happening to be an excellent novelist and playwright. But having served on many literary committees, he must know perfectly well that there is no positive correlation between the two: that good sense, or its reverse, is as likely to be talked by publishers, literary editors or booksellers as by practising writers themselves.

At the root of Harwood's outburst lies the traditional suspicion by artists of professional critics and professional administrators, and the belief that it takes an artist to understand an artist. As a non-"literary" member of the Literature Panel, I have my personal axe to grind. I do not believe that my own qualifications for contributing to Panel discussions are less than Harwood's any more than I believe that my empathy for serious novelists, say, in my work as a literary agent would be enhanced by my having written good novels myself.

Among the many mudpies that are thrown at the Arts Council, I regard Harwood's as among the more pernicious. A short while ago, a former Minister for the Arts suggested that the Council should be made up of official representatives of specific groups of interest—political parties, trades unions and suchlike. Harwood's argument, taken to its logical conclusion, is not so dissimilar. Does he really believe that a Council consisting of statutory painters, actors, playwrights, theatre directors, singers and composers would lead to higher standards of excellence than the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

present collection sneered at as "lawyers, lords and ladies, academics and journalists and even critics, God help us"?

I mind Harwood's attack because I regard it as irrelevant to the crucial issues of arts patronage of which the maintenance of artistic standards is only one among many: the all-important question of priorities in disposing of available funds, how to control the use of public money without imposing sterile bureaucratic controls, how the Council can acquire the courage to turn off certain taps to enable resources to be deflected to new innovative enterprises, ways in which the public can be encouraged to demand more money spent on the arts and higher standards so as to make it easier for the Minister of the Arts to lobby successfully for more money from the Treasury. I have no idea whether the Arts Council as at present constituted is helpful to these largely political ends, but I am sure that to have more practising artists on the Council, even if they could afford the (unpaid) time to devote to the cause, would not be any guarantee of better results.

HILARY RUBINSTEIN

London

Kerfuffle, Argy-Bargy & Bumf

AS AN AMERICAN, and one located deep in the provinces, may I ask whether the following words in Roy Fuller's interesting (we have an "Arts Commission" in New Mexico) "Taxpayers, the Arts and Big Balloonz" (October) are the Queen's English or an original contribution by the former Oxford Professor of Poetry: *kerfuffles*, *argy-bargy*, and *bumf*.

I note that Mr Fuller has been a solicitor, and I am curious whether Kerfuffle, Argy-Bargy, and Bumf is a firm he perhaps had dealings with. (Out here we credit Churchill with saying, ending a sentence with a proposition is something up with which I will not put).

P.S. Following up my letter, I must report, for whatever significance it may have, that I find "argle bargle" in the October 24 issue of the *New Yorker* magazine.

SAUL COHEN

Santa Fe,
New Mexico

"ARGY-BARGY" AND "BUMF" are both in Volume I of the new supplement to the *OED* (and in the Random House and Webster's *New International* dictionaries, perhaps more likely to be found in a Santa Fe lawyer's).

The original form "argle-bargle" is, I think, now used only by those with a rather precious concern for prose style, like the *New Yorker*. "Bumf" rather than the euphemistic "bumph" (paper—"esp. with contemptuous implication" *OED*—deriving from bum-fodder, schoolboy slang for lavatory paper) was hallowed as long ago as 1912 by Virginia Woolf. The form "kerfuffle" is in Volume II of the *OED* supplement, where the earliest usage is given as 1959, which I should have thought extremely late for it to have got into print. "Curfuffle" (disorder) is in the *OED* itself, both as verb and substantive.

I never encountered Messrs Kerfuffle, Argy-Bargy and Bumf, but then I was mainly a conveyancing lawyer: that firm would have been wholly on the litigation side.

ROY FULLER

London

Millenarians?

DR CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN writes in "Liberty and Terror" (ENCOUNTER, October) that the terrorists, whom he calls millenarians, "aim at destroying the structure of society . . . and assume, that what would replace a bombed out capitalism or communism would be a new and ideal form of society. . . ." He does not, however, produce examples of terrorist activities against communist states which would support his argument that his millenarians are indifferent between capitalism and communism.

Is not the current wave of terrorism by the "millenarians" directed overwhelmingly against Western democracies, and not against communist states?

P. T. BAUER

London

Catch Phrases

THANK YOU for D. J. Enright's review of *Catch Phrases* in ENCOUNTER. He has done me a good turn by providing me with four or five very useful notes to the supplement I'm preparing. (I had—before your review—caught up with the ultimate origin of *alone I did it*.) Strange that I'd missed David Browning's *Everyman's Dictionary of Quotations*. . . . I used to have a copy—and gave it away.

What no reviewer has noticed or, at the least, seen fit to mention is that here was a job of sheer pioneering, and the further fact that I had put years of hard work into the necessary research, not a little of it into American literature.

ERIC PARTRIDGE

Landscove
Newton Abbot
Devon

"Organised Violence"

I AM FASCINATED to learn from Mr Correlli Barnett (November 1977) that in spending two years researching and writing *The Strange Death of Private White*, an event hitherto ignored by military historians, my "purpose" was "to milk our indignation and our class prejudice", and that, in pursuit of this nefarious purpose, I "cunningly drop in such damning pieces of evidence as that the Colonel of the regiment had been brought up in a pleasant country house."

As readers may, of course, verify, far from "dropping in" anything, I have been at pains to set *each*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

participant in the scandal in his full social context, and, in my cunning, I devote several pages to tributes to the humanity and competence of the Colonel, including one from a private soldier.

Public indignation over Private White's death in 1846, three weeks after suffering a punishment of 150 lashes, visibly embarrassed Lord John Russell's government, and forced a clearly reluctant Wellington to limit lashes to a "mere" fifty. A Press which could no longer be intimidated projected the prolonged inquest under the Radical coroner, Dr Thomas Wakley, as the class confrontation it soon became, producing—as a critic said of *Hard Times*, written a few years later—"shock waves as one social stratum grated against another."

I am sorry these "gratings" so offend Mr Barnett's ear, but they are inescapable. Even so, it required the Liberal victory of 1880, plus the help of Parnell and the Irish members, to force through the abolition of ritual "Military Torture" (General Sir Charles Napier's phrase, not mine!)—still in the teeth of opposition from the Commander-in-Chief and the Queen.

By then the lash had been abolished for years in every army in Europe, save the Russian.

Just whose "class prejudice" are we talking about, I wonder?

HARRY HOPKINS
London

HARRY HOPKINS is being disengenuous. It is true that towards the end of his book he admits that Colonel Whyte of the 7th Hussars was a humane and competent officer by the standards of the time, but then he can hardly fail to do so in the face of direct evidence to that effect. Nevertheless this admittal only contradicts the general impression of Whyte and his regiment conveyed by the author's loaded literary style. For example, on Whyte's first main entry into the story we are not told that he was an efficient and humane officer. Instead we are given details of the properties owned by Whyte's family, their aristocratic connections, Whyte's marriage to a French-Canadian lady of titled ancestry. Writes Hopkins: "It was undoubtedly a brilliant match in every sense of the term, an elegant variation, a new and glittering thread in the Whyte family web of notable alliances. But then as a dashing colonel of thirty-six, commanding a fashionable hussar regiment . . . John James Whyte enjoyed considerable advantages and everything indicates that he knew how to use them." Hopkins then gives us an ironic commentary on Whyte's portrait: "the face achieves the prescribed expression of glazed insolence." With regard to the dual Catholic and Protestant ceremonies in which Whyte and his bride were married, Hopkins offers this characteristic gloss: "It is not recorded that 689 Private White or his pals were invited to either ceremony. . . ."

Dr Kiosk Speaks Again (II)

"SCHOOLGIRL pregnancy is sometimes the 'female equivalent of football violence', said a Health Education expert speaking at the Annual Congress of the Royal Society of Health. . . . Dr Donald Reid, Assistant Director of the Health Education Council, said that for some schoolgirls who are failures in everything else, the only success they can have is getting pregnant. No amount of sex education will help these few; though maybe individual counselling could help" (*Family Planning Association News*).

Dr Heinz Kiosk, eminent social psychologist, sex education expert and chief psychiatric adviser to the Potato Crisp Authority, comments: "It is not clear whether by 'football violence' Dr Reid means violence on the football field or violence among the spectators, or both.*

"In any case the solution to the problem lies in getting schoolgirls to take more part in football violence in general. There is no reason why they should not be just as capable as boys of hurling objects at footballers or at each other, of wielding the knife, cosh and knuckleduster or of entombing referees in cold rice pudding or other substances to express their healthy rejection of élitist authority.

"I have long urged that the Government should give bigger grants for these liberating leisure activities. An official Government agency for the organisation of mixed hooligans' and vandals' clubs is a crying need.

"There is, as so often, a reverse side to the problem. Football violence by teenage boys is sometimes the male equivalent of schoolgirl pregnancy. Boys who are frustrated at not being able to become pregnant 'compensate' by football violence.

"No amount of sex education, or even counselling, can help them, but that is no reason for cutting down on sex education, which, as I am sure the Health Education Centre and the Family Planning Association will agree, is an absolute good in itself—one of the very few we sex education experts can be certain of in our unjust, alienated and consumerised society."

Peter Simple
IN THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

* See the portrait of Dr Kiosk by Michael Wharton in ENCOUNTER, April 1975, and "Dr Kiosk Speaks Again (I)", September 1975.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If I may give one further example of the Hopkins technique, he makes a point of telling us that two days after Private White first reported burning pains in his chest the regiment was inspected by a visiting general, the inspection being followed by a splendid lunch in the mess attended by a distinguished company of ladies and gentlemen. Of what relevance to Private White's death is this? Does Hopkins mean to imply that the inspection or the lunch ought to have been cancelled because Private White had a pain in his chest? Or that splendid lunches ought not to have been taking place at all?

No: the lunch is mentioned next to Private White's pain in the chest in order, if I may quote my original review, to milk our indignation and our class prejudice.

CORRELLI BARNETT

East Carleton
Norfolk

AUTHORS

Clive Sinclair taught for a year at the University of California in Santa Cruz after taking a degree at the University of East Anglia where he is now doing research on Yiddish Literature. He is the author of a novel, *Bibliosexuality* (Allison & Busby, 1973), and is completing a book on Isaac Bashevis Singer and his brother Israel Joshua Singer.

George Kennan's article is based on the text of an address which he delivered recently to the American Council on Foreign Relations.

F. A. Hayek was Professor of Economic Science and Statistics at the University of London from 1931–50, and has held chairs at the Universities of Chicago (1950–62), Freiburg (1962–70), and Salzburg (1970–77); he is now once again associated with the University of Freiburg. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1974. Among his articles in ENCOUNTER are "Types of Mind" (September 1975), "Nature *v.* Nurture Once Again" (February 1971), and "My Cousin, Ludwig Wittgenstein" (August 1977). A collection of his essays, *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas*, has recently been published by Routledge.

George Feaver is Professor of Political Science at the University of British Columbia, and the author of *From Status to Contract: A Biography of Sir Henry Maine* (Longman, 1969). His series of articles on the American Indians appeared in ENCOUNTER for 1975, in the February, March, April, May, and October issues.

R. S. Thomas's most recent book of poems, *Laboratories of the Spirit*, was published last year by Macmillan.

François Fejtö is Paris correspondent for *Il Giornale Nuovo* and author of *The French Communist Party* (M.I.T. Press, 1967), and *History of the People's Democracies* (Pall Mall Press, n.e. Penguin Books, 1974).

Ferdinand Mount is Political Correspondent of the *Spectator*, and author of *The Theatre of Politics* (Weidenfeld, 1972) and of a novel, *The Man Who Rode Ampersand* (Chatto & Windus, 1975). Among his articles in ENCOUNTER are "Revolutionaries" (December 1977) and "The Owl & the Water-Beetle" (January 1977).

Roy Harris is a Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, and the first holder of Oxford's newly established chair of General Linguistics. His publications include *Synonymy and Linguistic Analysis* (Blackwell, 1973).

Ninian Smart is Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Lancaster. His books include *The Science of Religion and the Sociology of Knowledge* (new paper edition, Princeton University Press, 1977), a survey of the major world religions, *The Long Search* (BBC Publications, 1977), and *The Phenomenon of Religion* (Macmillan, 1973).

Neil Warren is Reader in Social Psychology in the School of African and Asian Studies at the University of Sussex. He has worked in Africa and New Guinea, and is editor of the *Studies in Cross-Cultural Psychology* series (Academic Press).

Michael Dummett is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, of which he has been Sub-Warden since 1974, and has recently been appointed Wykeham Professor of Logic, University of Oxford. Among his books are *Frege: Philosophy of Logic and Language*, published in 1973 by Duckworth, who will shortly be bringing out his *Truth and Other Enigmas*.

Antony Flew is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Reading. His books include *Socialism, Education, and Equality* (Macmillan Press, 1977), *The Presumption of Atheism* (Pemberton, 1976), and *Introduction to Western Philosophy* (Thames & Hudson, 1971).

Alain Besançon is Professor of History at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Paris. He is a former Fellow at Columbia University and was a member of the 1960s foreign policy group with Zbigniew Brzezinski. His analysis of Russian Communism, *The Soviet Syndrome*, will shortly be published in translation by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. His article in this issue of Encounter originally appeared in *Contrepoint*.

Melvin J. Lasky's *Utopia and Revolution* is published by the University of Chicago Press in the United States and by Macmillan in London.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WATMOUGHS LIMITED, IDLE, BRADFORD; AND LONDON

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

London

BOOKS & BOOZE: *A public library in Mansfield (Nottinghamshire) has been granted a licence to sell alcohol. But to rejoice is premature. The licence is subject to the condition that alcohol may be sold only to "those attending bona fide functions authorised by", wait for it—yes, you are right, "the director of leisure services."*

So we must put aside, for the moment, those visions of wandering among the shelves glass in hand, or standing at the combined bar and book-issuing desk, chatting about literary matters with agreeable companions or with the landlord-librarian and the assistant librarian-barmaids.

As time went on a certain confusion might arise: a certain difficulty in distinguishing between books and bottles [Peter Simple writes].

"A large Scotch please, landlord, and this new edition of the Letters of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. And have something yourself."

"Very kind of you sir. I'll have a Simenon and a light ale."

"Chomsky? Oo, you are awful," giggles the assistant librarian barmaid at the other end of the bar, pulling a handle which releases a stream of draught stout over the works of the celebrated linguistic philosopher.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

PHILOPHOBIA?: The American singer, Perry Como is due in London this week to record a special Christmas album at Hever Castle. I would recommend the drawbridge be pulled up at once. According to his record company Como is about to "indulge in unashamed Anglophobia." I hope they meant Anglophilia.

EVENING STANDARD

London

IN FUNNY ITALY: *A little booklet has reached me from the Oxford School of English, in Conegliano, northern Italy. The booklet is given free to readers of* Domenica del Corriere.

Learning English is child's play, it says, and then goes about its work in appropriately juvenile fashion. In its pronunciation guide, it opts for such everyday phrases as "I am not a cat, I'm a dog", and "Aren't you a spider? No, you aren't a fly", and "It is not an Irish shaker" and "I am not a Greek reader", and "You are not a Dutch writer".

In a devastatingly useful footnote, the guide says there is one sure way of achieving an authentic English—"or almost Oxford"—accent. Speak with a smoker's pipe clenched firmly between the teeth, it says.

THE TIMES

Senegal

DDOUBLLE CONSONNANTS: The film maker, M. Ousmane Sembene, has protested to the government ban on his film *Ceddo*, in an open letter to the President. The controversy stems from M. Sembene's refusal to spell his film *Cedo* (soldiers), with a single "d" as required by a decree on the transcription of the dominant language, Wolof.

As single consonant transcription is enforceable by law, double consonants have become a symbol of Senegal's left-wing opposition.

WEST AFRICA

London

RATOMORPHISM: *Sex education that did not stress the need for loving and caring relationships was condemned by a child expert last night.*

Dr. Mia Pringle was speaking the day after a 12-year-old boy was given a life sentence for killing a girl of four when he tried to have sex with her. He told the court that his teacher had never spoken of marriage, love or affection during six sex lessons at a Bedfordshire school.

Dr. Pringle, director of the National Children's Bureau, an independent research group, said: "In my view it is a mistake to introduce sex education without teaching children about love, affection and human understanding. In the past 20 years or so we have gone badly wrong in taking sex education by itself—instead of treating it as a part of the whole range of human relationships."

The 12-year-old boy's sex lessons were part of a syllabus prepared by the Nuffield Foundation and used in hundreds of secondary schools throughout the country. The booklet dealing with animal and human reproduction is included in a set of five under the general heading "Combined Science". Among the factual information and illustrations, there is no indication that sex should be part of a deep, loving relationship.

In court, the boy said that he had been misled by a picture of two gerbils mating. He thought this was the human method, too.

Under the picture of the gerbils is a description of how they mate. But there is no information about human intercourse. The only details accompanying a picture of a naked man and woman read: "Men and women have similar parts to the ones you saw on the rats."

DAILY MAIL

Tucson, Arizona

AH, NOSTALGIA: I remember a time when gas was gas and coal was coal, and the word energy described Ray Bolger's dancing, what Hershey bars give quickly, and a quality some admirable folks have more of than others. Ah, technology!

TIME

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1478 1978 **Oxford University Press**

Notes of a Non-Conspirator

Efim Etkind

Efim Etkind, born in 1918, was for over twenty years a Professor at the Herzen Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad, becoming a leading member of the Writers' Union. His book tells how he lost both these positions in 1974 and was compelled to leave the Soviet Union and continue in France his work as a translator and author. *Notes of a Non-Conspirator* is a moving, sometimes grimly comic, exploration of Soviet intellectual life. £5.25

The Social and Political Thought of Leon Trotsky

Baruch Knei-Paz

Dr. Knei-Paz shows that Trotsky's was the most far-reaching and original of theoretical attempts to deal with the relationship between Marxism and the Social-Democratic movement on the one hand, and backwardness and the problems of preindustrial or underdeveloped society on the other. His book is the first comprehensive exposition and critical analysis of Trotsky's social and political ideas. £15.

Writers on the Left

Daniel Aaron

The American literary and political experience between 1912 and the outbreak of the Second World War was expressed in large part by the writers on the left discussed here by Professor Aaron. This chronicle of the period is an important study in literary history; it is also an attempt to understand why the radical cause seemed a glorious crusade to so many intellectuals and why most of them became disenchanted with it in the 1940s and 1950s. Paper covers £3.75 *Galaxy Books*

Artaud and After

Ronald Hayman

The French poet, playwright, actor, and director Antonin Artaud, who died in 1948, lived most of his life in dire poverty and extreme physical suffering. Through his work on stage and in films and through his writings, Artaud has had perhaps the greatest influence of any single figure on contemporary theatre in the West. This book discusses his life, his writings, and his continuing influence. Illustrated £6 *Oxford Paperbacks* £2.25

Mr. Prone

A Week in the Life of an Ignorant Man

C. H. Rolph

'C. H. Rolph has distilled his immense experience of the courts and the law into a cautionary tale for the unwary, in a form and at a price which will make it widely accessible. It deserves a place on the citizen's bookshelf,' *New Statesman*. 'The buoyant narrative humanizes the story with a literate and genially satiric touch.' *Church Times*. £2.95

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED